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NEW IRELAND.

BY

A. M. SULLIVAN.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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PREFATORY.

WITHIN considerably less than half a century, changes, social and political, accomplishing a veritable revolution, have taken place in Ireland. In the following pages I have undertaken, not so much to picture them in all their phases, or to write a formal history of the period, as to supply, chiefly from personal observation, a series of sketches or narratives which may perhaps assist in the readier and more correct appreciation of visible results.

I have, indeed, been mindful of the fact that these volumes would be published, and, if I may say it, be read, in England; yet I decided not to write them either "for" or "at" the English people, but to tell my story in my own way, and from my own point of view. I do not pretend to be dispassionate. I have borne—as will be seen

in what follows—an active part in some of the stormiest scenes of Irish public life for at least a quarter of a century; and I wish to hold my place as a man of decided views and strong convictions. I trust, however, it may be found that I have taken thought of the responsibilities which devolve upon one who attempts a contribution, no matter how humble, to the history of his time, not to the controversies of politics or polemics.

I avow, perhaps, too bold an ambition in expressing the hope that these chapters may assist in promoting that better understanding and kindlier feeling between the New England and the New Ireland which patriotic hearts on either shore must assuredly desire. No lighter consideration, no hope less high, has led me to undertake them.

ALEXANDER M. SULLIVAN.

LONDON, *September* 25, 1877.

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NEW IRELAND.

CHAPTER I.

LOOKING BACK.

THE years that reach from the fifth to the eighth decade of this century cover an eventful time in general history. They have brought great changes on every hand for nations and peoples. Even where no clash of arms has sounded, other forces have effected revolutions; other causes have been at work to destroy the Old and set up the New. Ancient landmarks have been overthrown; long-treasured customs, habits, and traditions swept away; and in instances not a few the whole face of society has been altered, for better or for worse. In Ireland this period has witnessed some startling transformations. It may, indeed, be said that the old Ireland—the Ireland of Forty Years Ago—can now be seen no more.

Revisiting recently the scenes of my early life,

realised more vividly than ever the changes which thirty years had effected. I sailed once more over the blue waters of the bay on which I was, so to say, cradled; climbed the hills and trod the rugged defiles of Glengariffe and Beara, by paths and passes learnt in childhood and remembered still. The material scene in all its wild beauty and savage grandeur was unchanged; but it was plain that a new order of things had arisen. New faces were around me—new manners, habits, and social usages. The Gaelic salutations were few: it was in the English tongue that "A fine day, sir" took the place of "God save you" in the Irish. "My foot" was indeed "on my native heath," yet I felt in a sense a stranger. Not there, but in Boston and Milwaukee and San Francisco, could be found the survivors of the hardy fishermen and simple mountaineers amongst whom I grew to boyhood. Yet, natural regrets apart, I owned that all the change was not disaster. Much indeed had been lost, but much had been gained.

Was all that I saw, all that I missed, a reflection or figure in miniature of what had taken place throughout the island? Unquestionably this district and its people had long played a typical

part, so to speak, in the vicissitudes of our national life. The extreme south-west of Ireland, the Atlantic angle formed by West Cork and Kerry, long has had a peculiar interest for the student of Irish history, social and political. Mr. Froude gives it unusual prominence as the scene of what he considers characteristic incidents in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. In the last formidable struggle of the Gaelic princes for native sovereignty, this region performed in the south very much the part which Donegal played in the north; the three men under whom the final campaign of 1595–1599 was fought being Hugh O'Neill, Prince of Tyrone, Hugh O'Donnell, Prince of Tyrconnell, and Donal O'Sullivan, Chieftain of Beara.

In that struggle Spain was the ally of the Irish Chiefs, and the proximity of the Carbery and Beara headlands to the Iberian peninsula—the facilities offered by their deep bays and ready harbours for the landing of expeditions, envoys, arms, and subsidies—gave to the district that importance which it retained down to 1796, when it was the scene of the attempted or rather intended French invasion under Hoche. Declared forfeit in 1607, on the conclusion of the campaign above

referred to, confiscated again in 1641, and a third time in 1691. Beara at length passed totally from the O'Sullivans. The last notable member of the disinherited family * entered the service of France with the Irish army under Sarsfield, on the capitulation of Limerick.

The clansmen scowled on the new landlords, who, indeed, for very long after never ventured upon even a visit to the place. From 1700 to 1770, as Mr. Froude has very graphically described, Bantry and the surrounding bays were the great outlets through which, in defiance of the utmost power and vigilance of the Government, shiploads of recruits for the Irish Brigade (called "wild geese" in the bills of lading) and cargoes of wool (at the time forbidden to be exported) were despatched to France, Spain, and the Low Countries.

In the smuggling or exportation of contraband fleeces, and importation of silk, brandy, and tobacco, the population pushed a lucrative and exciting trade down very nearly to the close of the last century, when it may be said to have

* His sister was wife of Colonel MacMahon, of the same service, direct ancestor of Marshal Patrick MacMahon, Duke of Magenta, President of the French Republic.

totally disappeared. Henceforward they devoted themselves exclusively and energetically to a combination of fishing and petty agriculture; their characters, manners, habits, and traditions, their virtues and their vices, more or less impressed by the antecedent history which I have endeavoured thus briefly to sketch.

It is amongst this class, the rural population, that the most striking changes have been wrought all over Ireland within the present generation. The Irish peasant of forty years ago—his home, his habits, manners, dress; his wit and humour, his tender feeling, his angry passions, his inveterate prejudices—all these have been portrayed with more or less of exaggeration a hundred times. Caricature has done its worst with the subject; but justice has sometimes touched the theme. One of the changes most pleasing in our time is the fact that in England the clumsy "stage Irishman" of former days is no longer rapturously declared to be the very acme of truthful delineation. The Irish are keenly sensitive to ridicule or derision; and to see the national character travestied in miserable novel or brutal farce—the Irish peasant pictured as a compound of idiot and buffoon—for the merriment of the master race, was an exaspera-

tion more fruitful of hatred between the peoples than the fiercest invective of those "agitators" whom it has been the fashion to credit with the exclusive manufacture of Irish sedition.

Banim and Griffin, Mrs. Hall and Carleton, have left pictures of Irish life and character which on the whole cannot be surpassed for fidelity and effectiveness. The only class which none of them have photographed for us are the cottier fishermen communities that thirty years ago crowded the coasts of Connaught and Munster. These have almost entirely vanished. The Irish Fishery Commissioners year by year bewail their disappearance; the royal and mercantile navy miss the hardy and fearless seamen so easily picked up along these harbours, trained from childhood to combat wave and wind. Deep-sea fishing properly so called was hardly attempted, the boats and gear to be found around the western coast being quite inadequate for the purpose. Kinsale and Cape Clear boasted some fine "hookers" engaged in the ling and cod fishery; but six-oared herring-seine boats were the craft most generally in use. The crews tilled small farms or rocky patches of potato-ground when the moonlight was too bright for fishing; and on the potatoes thus raised, and

a reserve of the fish for home use, they altogether depended for subsistence. Between Cape Clear and Dursey Island a little piloting was sometimes done; albeit very little knowledge of compass or quadrant existed amongst the "pilots." One of them told me how nearly he missed a "splendid job"—five pounds' worth—because he could not "box the compass" for the captain of a West-indiaman homeward bound. "Not box the compass!" exclaimed the captain. "You a pilot!"

"Oh, sir, I mean, sir, I cannot do it *in English*. You see, sir, we all speak Irish in our village on shore, barrin' a little English that me and the boys picks up, ye see, from being after the ships."

"Well," said the captain, after a pause, "let me hear you do it in Irish." He, correctly enough, reflected that in almost any language one could detect whether the words would follow with such similarity of sound as north, north-and-by-east, north-north-east, north-east-by-north, and so on. But old Jack Downing was just as sharp as the captain was keen. Often and often at Mrs. Crowley's public-house on shore he had heard sailors "box the compass"; and though he could not attempt the task, he knew how it sounded to the ear.

"Yes, to be sure, sir; I'll do it for you in Irish," and he forthwith began in homely Gaelic to recite—"My grandfather—my grandmother—my grandfather's grandmother—my grandmother's grandfather—my great great grandfather—my——"

"Stop, stop," shouted the captain, perfectly convinced. "I see, my poor fellow, I had wronged you: *take charge of the ship.*"

Few sights could be more picturesque than the ceremony by which, in our bay, the fishing season was formally opened. Selecting an auspicious day, unusually calm and fine, the boats, from every creek and inlet for miles around, assembled at a given point, and then, in solemn procession, rowed out to sea, the leading boat carrying the priest of the district. Arrived at the distant fishing-ground, the clergyman vested himself, an altar was improvised on the stern-sheets, the attendant fleet drew around, and every head was bared and bowed while the mass was said. I have seen this "mass on the ocean" when not a breeze stirred, and the tinkle of the little bell or the murmur of the priest's voice was the only sound that reached the ear; the blue hills of Bantry faint on the horizon behind us, and

nothing nearer beyond than the American shore!

Where are all these now? The "mass on the ocean" is a thing of the past, heard of and seen no more; one of the old customs gone apparently for ever. The fishermen—the fine big-framed fellows, of tarry hands and storm-stained faces? The workhouse or the grave holds all who are not dockside men on the Thames or the Mersey, on the Hudson or the Mississippi. The boats? I saw nearly all that remains of them when I last visited the little cove that in my early days scarce sufficed to hold the fleet—at low water, skeleton ribs protruding here and there from the sand, or shattered hulks helplessly mouldering under the trees that drooped into the tide when at the full.

Off the western coast of Ireland are several islands the inhabitants of which, previous to the present generation, never quitted, never cared to quit, their prison homes. The mainland—Ireland—was to them a vast continent, where astounding marvels were, it was said, to be seen. Torry Island ("Innis-Torragh"—Isle of Towers), off Donegal, retains at the present day, to a large degree, this isolation. It is still governed by a

fisherman king, elected by the community of three or four hundred souls. Quite recently, I believe, a police barrack, as well as a coast-guard station, has been placed there; but the "king" is, after all, the authority most deferred to. Strange to say, the present potentate of Torry is a Protestant, and the only professor of that creed (outside the police barrack and the coast-guard lodge) on the island.

Technically, or theoretically, Torry belonged to some barony on the neighbouring mainland; but until a couple of years ago no one dreamed of asserting this legal fact by calling on the Torrymen to pay baronial cess for making roads in the county on the other side of "the sound." They made their own roads, they used none other, and for none other would they pay. So spake the "king." The cess collector proceeded to gather a flotilla for an invasion, with purpose as resolute as that of the Norman William assembling his galleys in the roadstead of St. Valéry. Happily the authorities, anxious to avoid a conflict with a community so peculiar and so largely recommended to kindly sympathies, devised some compromise which averted hostilities.

Serious crime was, and I believe is, almost

unknown amongst these islanders. In Torry the first illegitimate birth known within the memory of the oldest inhabitant occurred about twenty years ago, and caused much commotion and dismay. A Torry girl had been to farm service on the mainland, and returned home to import the first moral stain of such a nature ever affixed on the character of her native island. The whole community met, under the presidency of the "king," and with one voice decreed *banishment to Ireland* for the hapless offender. When strong enough to bear removal, she and the infant were rowed across the sound. The neighbours gave her gifts and presents to help her in the future; but she was to return to Torry no more.

The present Bishop of Kerry, the Most Rev. Dr. Moriarty, told me he was making a visitation of his diocese, in the neighbourhood of the Blasket Islands, in 1856. The opportunity was seized by a young islander, who was desirous of getting married, to cross to the mainland and obtain a dispensation from his lordship, rendered necessary by some circumstance in the case. He had never crossed before, and he was all wonderment at what he saw. The bishop thought it right to assure himself as to the knowledge on the islander's part

of, at all events, the cardinal points of the Christian doctrine.

"How many gods are there, my good boy?" his lordship asked in Irish.

"Well, great and holy priest," replied the islander, "in Blasketmore we have but *one:* but 'tis very likely there may be more than that in this great big world here." Father Casey was directed to give the Blasketmore man a few days catechetical instruction, and then admit him to the matrimonial bond.

This class—the Atlantic coast and island men, from Cape Clear to Malin Head—suffered severely, were almost swept away, by the famine of 1847; a brave and hardy race, favourably distinguished in many respects from the peasantry of the midland counties. Their isolation saved them from the conflicts that disorganised the agrarian system in other portions of the kingdom. Their hard lot, their humble life, offered little temptation to envy or cupidity. The ocean was their principal "farm," and on this no landlord could raise a rent. The war of class and race and creed, that betimes raged elsewhere in Ireland, never touched these communities. Every man was their neighbour, and every stranger was a friend. Even at the

present day, though greatly weakened by the ordeal of the past thirty years, they present an interesting study, as perhaps the truest relics we now possess of the Celtic peasantry in the Ireland of old times.

Looking back upon those scenes, recalling such memories, I am not Stoic enough to contemplate unmoved the picture presented to my view. Yet it is needful to remember that in these retrospects justice is not always done to the present; a true value is rarely placed on the advance which, amidst combat and striving that often appear fruitless, and suffering and sacrifice that seem beyond compensation, is nevertheless being well established throughout the world, all along the line of civilisation.

CHAPTER II.

"THE SCHOOLMASTER ABROAD."

FIFTY years ago the schoolmaster was not abroad in Ireland. Indeed, in the previous century he had better not have been, if he wished to avoid conviction for felony under the 8th of Anne, cap. iii. sec. 16. In most of the rural parishes of Ireland not half a century ago, the man who could read a newspaper or write a letter was a distinguished individual, a useful and important functionary. He was the philosopher of the district. He wrote the letters for all the parish, and he read the replies for the neighbours who received them. After mass on Sunday, if haply the parish priest was rich enough to take a newspaper, the same public benefactor read from Father Tom's last-but-one weekly or bi-weekly broadsheet the news of what was going on in the world. If the weather was fine, seated on the green-sodded fence—on

rainy days perched on the anvil in the neighbouring smithy—he gave forth to the eager and wondering crowd the latest speech of O'Connell or Sheil, Peel or Stanley. Occasionally the parochial letter-writer and public reader was, as in Italy even at the present day, a sort of professional, charging a fee for his services. Some of these practitioners had set forms for letters of a certain classification, whence perhaps arose the idea of the "Complete Letter-writer" as a publication.*

In these performances lengthy words, or those strange and new in sound, were highly valued. A word of four syllables was supposed to be twice as powerful as one of two. A parochial letter-writer in Bearhaven who used to boast that he had "broken"—*i.e.*, procured the dismissal of—three gaugers and removed two sub-inspectors was once retained to indite a complaint against a policeman. He read out to his awe-struck clients as the finish of a sentence—"he being supereminently obnoxious to the people." "Do you

* One of my colleagues in the *Nation* office showed me not long since a letter which came from a youthful correspondent in Clare, who wanted "Mr. Editor" to recommend to him "A Complete Letter-writer on Love or Business"; adding by way of postscript, "N.B. Love preferred at present."

hear that," said he, laying down the pen for a moment, and looking around with an air of pride and triumph: "supereminently! That one word alone is enough to take the jacket off him!"

That a few of these learned letter-writers survive here and there in Ireland I have had evidence from time to time in the course of my editorial experiences in Dublin. Out of quite a store of such curiosities I quote two communications sent for publication to one of my journals. The first deals with "Sunday-closing":—

SIR,—It is an indubitable fact, absolutely impervious to the ratiocination of any syllogistic political economist, that the solicitude of British representatives for the auriferous progress of the excise divests them of every sentiment of philanthropy, of all consideration for the social misery, the moral derogation; and the domestic indigence of the infatuated frequenters of public-houses on Sundays. But to deviate from general principles to facts in particular, I think that a moiety of Irish publicans seem to have but little scrupulous regard to the dictates of conscience in deriving benefits from the ruination of their customers. That the publican's till is the receptacle of a large amount of the wealth of the country is clearly demonstrated by the fact of their wives being a vivid panorama of *bon ton*, and actually living to all appearances in perpetual anticipation of the various vicissitudes of fashion. Indeed some alcoholic vendors rather disingenuously carry on a magnetic system of lucrative appropriation through the medium of an exquisite

barmaid, whose commercial smile of inexpressible blandiloquence is invariably calculated to stimulate the extravagant propensities of the young and industrious artisan.—Respectfully yours,

SATURN.

Of another, from the same correspondent, devoted to the vexed question of "Connemara Proselytism," I quote the opening portion:—

Cong, April 12, 1874.

SIR,—I sincerely trust I will not be considered an animated definition of the mediocral abilities existing between the sublime and the ridiculous when I say that a Catholic Irishman whose solicitude for the annihilation of the various considerations appertaining to sectarian animosities may have induced him to entertain a profound repugnance to all kinds of religious discussions, can have no earthly objection to class amongst the most ostensible of Ireland's grievances the odious prevalence in the isolated districts of an accumulation of stipendiary bible-readers, whose terrestrial ideas of the sanctimonious are orthodoxly proved to be by no means diametrical to the dictates of a pecuniary inspiration by their indefatigable efforts to propagate the grand tenet that the celestial felicity of a defunct Papist can only be achieved through the medium of sundry scriptural quotations, and the quondam system of immeasurable doses of infallible broth. Having fortuitously encountered one of these sublunary gentlemen, I, being unable to surmount the difficulties of an analytical excavation of the Scriptures, felt myself under the sternly imperative necessity of having recourse to a perfunctory subterfuge that precipitated his biblical interpolations into a chaotic state of chimerical amalgamation.

* * * * *

These erudite contributions were, alas! not given to the public eye; but my colleague, who

withheld them from print, was careful to hand them to me for a place in my portfolio of literary treasures.

It was illiteracy, not ignorance in a degrading sense, that prevailed forty years ago in Ireland. The Irish peasant was naturally intelligent; was not deficient in knowledge of things necessary for his avocations, and above all he was, in a simple rustic way, courteous and polite. The great butt of taunt and sarcasm throughout the parish was an "ignoramus"—one who was clumsy, ill-mannered, or stupid.*

It was a calamity, the evil effects of which will long outlive even the best efforts to retrieve them, that at the period when in other countries, and

* One of the changes most noticeable in the Irish peasant who has been to America and has returned home is a disregard of and contempt for little courtesies that he has come to believe were servilities. In a land of liberty and republican equality he learned to reflect with shame how he touched his hat to a social superior at home. 'Twas a slavish custom, he thinks, and he throws it off, assuming instead what he means to be an assertive independence and equality, that too often is merely rudeness. No doubt in Ireland there was to be seen downright and painful servility; cringing, cowering slaves standing on the roadside with bared heads, in falling rain or sleet, while some squireen lashed them with his tongue. But between this and the genuine politeness of the Irish peasant of the better type the difference was wide and plain.

especially in England and Scotland, popular education was being developed and extended into a public system, in Ireland the legislature of the day was passing statute after statute to prohibit and punish any acceptable education whatsoever—university, intermediate, or primary—for nine-tenths of the population. That is to say, the bulk of the population being Catholic, penal laws against Catholic schools—laws which made it felony for a Catholic to act as teacher, usher, or monitor, and civil death for a Catholic child to be taught by any such masters—were virtually a prohibition of education to the mass of the people. No useful purpose can be served by a dismal parade in these pages of the enactments that throughout nearly the whole of the last century effected that dreadful proscription. Statute after statute, penalty after penalty, was rained upon the people.

Still, crouching 'neath the sheltering hedge, or stretched on mountain fern,
The teacher and his pupils met, feloniously, to learn!

The man who thoughtlessly, or unaware of the facts, points blame or scorn at the Irish for their "ignorance," little knows what he is about. In whatever else they may be amenable to reproach

or censure, in the matter of education the Irish are not culprits but victims.

As early as 1783 the legislature commenced repealing the severest of these enactments against Catholic teaching in Ireland; by 1830 they had nearly all been swept away; and in the year following the late Lord Derby, at that time Mr. Stanley, Irish Chief Secretary, proposed and established the present State-school system. By this a Government board of commissioners was established in Dublin to superintend and administer primary education throughout Ireland. No Government schools were set up or newly established; but local patrons or managers of primary schools were invited to attach themselves to the Board and obtain a yearly grant of funds by conforming to the rules of the new system. To schools so placed under or in connection with their authority the commissioners granted school-requisites at reduced price, and a contribution towards the teachers' salaries. On the other hand, such schools were subject to visitation and report on the part of Government inspectors, and any infringement of the fundamental regulations forfeited the grant.

There had not been wanting efforts enough

previously to supply Ireland with public schools; but they were seminaries which the Catholic Irish could not be induced to enter. There were the Royal Free Schools in 1608, Erasmus Smith's Schools in 1733; the London Hibernian Society Schools in 1811, besides quite a number of others. They all aimed more or less energetically at "weaning the Irish youth from Popery"; and the Irish youth, still more energetically refusing to be so weaned, stopped away *en masse*. In the sad choice between loss of school education on the one hand, and sacrifice of religious convictions on the other, Irish parents preferred the former for their children. It was not that they cared little for education; they passionately worshipped it—yearned for it, as the blind may long to see the wonders of the earth and skies which they hear of but cannot realise. They dared the penalties of the 7 Will. III. cap. iv. sec. 1—which made it civil death for a Popish child to be sent to a school in foreign parts. Contraband scholars often were the return cargoes of the smuggling craft that nightly ran silks and brandies into Irish creeks and bays in the early part of the last century. The Irish valued education much, but they loved religion more.

Over the Irish national-school system established by Mr. Stanley in 1831 a fierce controversy has raged for some years. In one respect at all events, and indeed in many more respects than one, it has been a marvellous success, despite circumstances which have greatly marred and circumscribed its operations. That is to say, although that scheme rather painfully baulked the Irish of that which, after such severe suffering and sacrifice they had some reason to expect—namely, a system of public education as much in accordance with their religious convictions as the Scottish and English systems were with those of the Scotch and English peoples—they nevertheless "attorned" to it; and for the first time in Anglo-Irish annals, Irish children in thousands flocked into the Government schools.

Mr. Stanley stands in history as the author of the scheme; but as a matter of fact, Lord Cloncurry it was who devised and suggested it, the Irish Secretary coming slowly to espouse the project. When he did undertake the question, however, he dealt with it firmly; and not only went as far towards a complete solution as he might dare at the moment, but even exceeded in boldness what others in his place would

probably have proposed. He doubtless reflected that he was doing the best that was practicable at the time, and that in any event his scheme would be welcomed as a blessed boon compared with the pre-existing state of things in Ireland. On the one hand, all previous experiments aimed more or less directly at converting the Irish from Catholicism; on the other hand, the Irish demanded a public-school system at least as denominational as the English or Scottish system. His proposal was to forbid proselytism, but to exclude all denominationalism; "combined literary and separate religious instruction." At a fixed or particular hour Scripture lessons, catechism exercises, or other religious instruction might be given by the teacher, or any one else authorised by the parent so to do; but throughout the rest of the day, during school-hours proper, nothing in the nature of religious instruction was allowed. In the early years of the system (hardly in consonance with the strict letter of its rules) an attempt was made to go some way towards what would be called the teaching of "common Christianity." A scriptural "General Lesson" was framed by order of the commissioners, hung up in every school, and ordered to be read aloud by teacher

and pupils every day. In the early manuals portions of Bible history were given; and the Most Rev. Dr. Whately, Protestant archbishop of Dublin (one of the commissioners), compiled a book of religious instruction, called "Lessons on the Truths of Christianity," which the Board made a class-book in the schools. But soon this ticklish experiment broke down; the common religious teaching was abandoned, and the system was contracted more and more within its strictly non-religious basis. Secular schools were utterly repugnant to the "denominational" principles of the Catholics. Still, the system was so great a boon, compared with any previous plan or proposal, that the Catholic prelates, with but few exceptions,* decided that to reject it would be wrong, and might, moreover, seem like an obstruction of education on their part. The scheme, no doubt, was not theirs; the State was acting on its own view, for State reasons and with State funds. They would accept that system under reserve, make the most of it, and hope eventually to have it developed into something nearer to their own convictions.

* The Most Rev. Dr. MacHale, Archbishop of Tuam, from the outset resolutely refused to approve or accept the new system.

Mr. Stanley's experiment had to bear the disadvantages incidental to compromises. Protestant society, and this included very nearly the whole of the landed proprietary, felt indignant. To give education to these Catholic millions, unless an education that would help to lead them from spiritual slavery and superstition, could have but an evil ending, if it was not indeed a sin. No aid would *they* give, by local subscriptions, to such an apostacy from Bible principles. The Catholics, on the other hand, as we have seen, had *their* grievance. "The Government tell us," they said, "that this is what we must have; it is their choice, not ours. Well, let them pay for it." Between these two complaints the Irish national-education system has been left almost entirely dependent on the State grant for means of support; local effort, local aid, being of hardly appreciable extent. The unfortunate school-teachers have been great sufferers by this state of things. On £25 or £30 a year, a young woman of fair education, exemplary character, and respectable position was expected to clothe and support herself, and teach from day to day in a school to and from which, in the country districts, she had to walk three or four miles in summer's sun and winter's

rain. At the present day—and the salaries have been greatly improved within the past ten years —the emoluments of Irish national school-teachers do not average £50 a year.

It was a gigantic enterprise to establish and bring to its present dimensions and comparative efficiency the Irish national-school organisation. Those who are engaged in school-board work in England find how arduous is the task of constructing a new system even in wealthy cities and towns, where schools of some sort already exist. But all over three-fourths of Ireland everthing had to be undertaken *ab initio*, and under the most formidable disadvantages and discouragements. Where were school-houses to be found? Where were teachers to be obtained? Above all, where were the funds to come from? The Government grant, slender enough at best, was to be given to "aid" an "established" school. How were the schools to be established?

Happily one now sees when travelling through Ireland many neat and tidy little school-houses, with slated roofs and boarded floors. But the first "national schools" were woful make-shifts: thatched cabins with earthen floors, miserable and cheerless in winter, deathly in their effects on

the health of teacher and pupil. To set up even one of these in a considerable district was at first a great achievement. I have myself seen children of from six to sixteen years of age trudging (barefooted, of course) over bog and moor, crag and pathway, to such a school distant four or five miles—in some instances seven miles—from their homes!

The Education Commissioners, by more adequate parliamentary grants placed at their disposal, have been able to do a great deal in helping the erection of better school-houses; but the improvement now noticeable is almost entirely due to the toilsome and unwearied exertions of the clergy, who are, as a general rule, the local patrons or managers under the Board. The instances are also increasing every year where the landed proprietor of the district has largely or wholly, at his own cost, erected suitable national school-houses on the estate. Perhaps the most notable improvement, however, is that for which the Irish schools are indebted to the generosity of one man—Mr. Vere Foster. In one of those numerous pedestrian tours through Ireland which Mr. Foster has for a quarter of a century been accustomed to take, on some benevolent or philanthropic purpose bent, he

was struck with the fact which I have above alluded to—the wretched discomfort and unhealthiness of the damp earthen floor in schools frequented by bare-footed children. Keeping for the while his purpose to himself, he quietly noted down the dimensions of each such school throughout the country, and when his tour was completed, had a boarded floor supplied at his own cost to every one of them.*

During the first dozen years of its existence, the Irish national-school system, although supposed to be, as we have seen, quite undenominational, was, in practice, denominational. In few of the schools was the attendance "mixed." In Ulster, Protestant managers established schools in which a Catholic child was never seen; in the other provinces, Catholic managers (generally the parish priests) established schools in which a Protestant pupil never entered. In fact, in numberless parishes there were no Protestant youth to enter or to abstain. It soon became too patent an

* The author of this generous act is one of the most remarkable men in Ireland. He may be encountered betimes, simply attired in Irish home-spun grey, with knapsack strapped on his back, and a stout blackthorn in his hand, walking by easy stages through some remote county; silently devising or effecting some scheme worthy of "Howard the Good."

absurdity that out of respect for the conscience of the theoretic or imaginary but non-existent child of a different persuasion—this "legal fiction" for which the parish had never a realisation—the whole school should be conducted from year's end to year's end, as if he was in the flesh and verily present. After a while, teachers and managers disregarded the theory; and for a long time, despite the letter of the Board rules, wherever the schools were exclusively Protestant or exclusively Catholic in attendance, they were actually conducted as denominational schools. In Ulster, the Bible was freely read at all hours; in the south, the Catholic catechism mingled in the whole day's exercises. It is not unlikely, indeed, that the commissioners rather winked at all this, and thought it wise to let the system be accepted —to let it take root and grow anyhow. Once it was firmly established they could tighten up both rule and practice.

I witnessed on one occasion, some years after the tightening-up process had gone into play, a curious illustration of the working of the system.

In King's Inn Street, Dublin, in the midst of a very poor and wretched Catholic population, some of the zealous proselytising Protestant societies

established a school "under the Board," and duly received a Board grant. They kept within the Board rules as to the hours for religious instruction, yet were able to bring the ragged little Papists under scriptural class teaching all the same; for a breakfast or lunch was given along with it. In fact, when I visited the school, the soup-boilers were downstairs in the basement in full performance.

The Catholic clergy soon heard of these operations carried on under the ægis of the national Board system. They remonstrated, but the Board could do nothing; its rules were not violated. It was, however, pointed out to the reverend complainants that they too could set up a Board school in the district; which indeed they did, by taking *the opposite house in the street*, so that within a perch of one another there were two "national schools" arrayed in denominational duel. I heard of all this, and decided to see it for myself. When I visited "No. 2," or the Catholic school, which was taught by nuns, it was the rule hour for "religious instruction." I was astonished to see a beautiful little oratory at the end of the room, wreathed with flowers, and lighted up with tapers, while the children were singing in chorus

a Catholic hymn. "How on earth do the Board allow you to have this oratory?" I asked of the sister in charge. "It is forbidden to have any religious picture, symbol, or sign, and the practice of silently bowing the head in mental prayer, at the stroke of the clock, has been declared against the rules; yet here you have outstripped all these?"

"Oh, not at all," replied the nun; "just wait a while till the rule hour for resumption of school strikes, and you shall see."

Sure enough, at stroke of the clock a transformation that rather surprised me took place. Folding doors that I had not noticed were at once closed in on the oratory; a top fell over it, steps were drawn out in front, and lo! nothing appeared but *a teacher's rostrum!*

I hardly knew what to say—what feelings were uppermost at the first moment; but a very little reflection satisfied me that it could hardly have a good moral effect on children to see the "secular" and "religious" lines drawn so sharply as that.

I crossed the street to the Protestant school and entered into conversation with the teacher there. He grievously complained of the opposition establishment over the way, and spoke feelingly

of the reduction which it had effected in his daily attendance.

"The worst of it is, sir, we discovered that the young rascals used to come here to us in the morning and take our breakfast, and then make off across the street to the nuns."

"Did you then strike them off the roll?"

"We daren't, but we tried to identify the individual pupils who so acted, and stopped their breakfast on them. However, we have come upon a plan now which baffles them completely."

"What is that?"

"Why, sir, we don't give *the breakfast* till school and Scripture class are over at *three o'clock!*"

For many years the Protestant clergy and laity held entirely aloof from the national schools. They would not countenance a system of popular education that was not religious and scriptural. At all events a school without an open Bible—one in which the Bible would be padlocked and unpadlocked at certain hours—they would not have. If with some of them the objection partook of regret that opportunity for effecting conversions among the Catholics would be so far given up, there can be no question but that on the other hand with the bulk of the Protestant clergy and

laity it proceeded from an upright conscientious principle, and had reference solely or mainly to consideration for the youth of their own communion. Many overtures were made, many negotiations tried, for a long time in vain, to secure their adhesion. One great stumbling-block for them was a rule which forbade the teacher to allow a pupil while at school to be present at religious instruction different from the creed in which he was entered on the school register, unless the pupil was so present with his parents' ascertained permission. The Protestant clergyman, otherwise disposed to work with the national Board, stopped invincibly at this point. "My ordination vows," he said, "and my own sense of duty forbid me to take any one by the shoulder and remove him, lest he should hear me preach the gospel. I am quite ready to say that I will not *compel* any pupil in my school, if under the Board, to be so present, let him absent himself if he will; but if he be present I shall certainly not turn him off."

The Education Board on its part pleaded that it was upon the faith that their children ran no risk or chance whatever of being present at religious teachings not their own, within the school, that

the masses of the Irish people had been induced to come into the system. From 1844 to 1847 this controversy went on, the correspondence on behalf of the Protestant clergy being most ably conducted by the late Archdeacon Stopford, of Meath, and in September 1847 the following compromise was eventually arranged between him and the Board :—

Thenceforth no teacher need prevent a child from being present at religious instruction contrary to his registered creed; but whenever a pupil was for the first time so present, the teacher was to send to the parent a filled-up printed ticket notifying that fact. On this new rule—popularly known as "the Stopford Rule"—a large section of the episcopalian Protestant clergy and nearly all of the Presbyterians came in; but at exactly the same point, and on the same ground, there burst forth that complaint of broken faith and demand for denominational capitation grants which the Catholics have ever since been pressing so vehemently.

Such was in brief the early history, such the rise and progress, of the national-education system in Ireland.

It was not till ten or twelve years after the actual date of its establishment that even the first

faint signs of its work became noticeable outside the school-door threshold. But those who moved among the people, or narrowly watched the phases of their life, began as early as 1845 to note by a thousand symptoms that "the schoolmaster was abroad." From 1845 to the present day the national schools have been turning out a yearly crop of thousands, yea tens of thousands, of youth. The average standard of proficiency attained, especially in rural districts, is even still very low, owing to the short and broken periods for which children are allowed to attend school rather than help to earn for home by work in the fields. But slight as the actual achievement may be in a strictly educational point of view, socially and politically considered, nothing short of a revolution has been effected. There is now scarcely a farmhouse or working man's home in all the land in which the boy or girl of fifteen, or the young man or woman of twenty-five, cannot read the newspaper for "the old people," and transact their correspondence. Our amusing friend the parish letter-writer has almost disappeared. His occupation is gone. For public news the peasant no longer relies on the Sunday gossip after mass. For political views he is no

longer absolutely dependent on the advice and guidance of Father Tom. He may never find counsellor more devoted and faithful; the political course he may now follow may be more rash or more profitable, more wise or more wrong; but for good or ill it will be his own. He will still, indeed, trust largely to those whom he judges worthy of his confidence, and largely follow their lead; but not in the same way as of yore.

Not all at once will one perceive how many and how vast are the changes which flow from these altered circumstances. It is, I repeat, nothing less than a revolution that the humble little thatch-roofed national school—or, let me more accurately say, the national school supplemented by a cheap popular literature—has effected in Ireland. Political leadership, in the sense in which it prevailed in our fathers' time, is gone for ever—would be simply impossible now. And with the old-time leadership of one magnificent genius, or one well-trusted class, there have also disappeared many of the old-time modes and habits of political life and action It is utterly astonishing how few persons seem to realise or to have noticed these changes so palpably though so silently wrought under their very eyes during the last thirty years.

Every day we hear some one whose memory dwells ardently on the period of Reform or Emancipation or Repeal, telling us what should be done now, and how done, because it was done, and so done, then. As well might he tell us of the times of Brian Boru. Be it for better or be it for worse, a new Ireland has arisen since then.

CHAPTER III.

O'CONNELL AND REPEAL.

THE prominent figure, the leading character, in Irish life five and thirty years ago was Daniel O'Connell. As we look back upon that period we see his great form flung upon the Irish sky like that of some Titan towering above the race of men.

In Ireland he is fondly styled "the Liberator"; in England known as the "Irish Agitator." In Rome his memory is held in benediction as that of a "champion of the Church." Hardly yet, long as he has lain in the national mausoleum at Glasnevin, have prejudice and passion ceased to struggle over his bier, and allowed him to be dispassionately contemplated as an historical character.

No man can be named who at any time in Irish affairs attained to such popularity as that which was O'Connell's in 1844, when he may be said to have reached the zenith of his power. Like other master characters in history, he carved out his own

career, and attained to eminence by virtue of his own strong will, by the force of commanding genius. He inherited no lordly title; he succeeded to no great territorial influence. He belonged to an ancient and honoured Celtic family in West Kerry, and was expectant heir to an uncle—"Old Hunting-Cap"—who would have left him considerable means had the future tribune not married for love, and displeased the wealthy old squire. He entered the Irish bar. It is a singular fact that the only men who within the last hundred years became really great popular leaders in Ireland were barristers, who first won popular confidence and popular influence by their forensic abilities; namely, Daniel O'Connell and Isaac Butt. The bar, in any country possessing such an institution, must always to a great extent contribute "leaders of public opinion." From its ranks are most likely to come, unless abnormal influences prevail, the men most able to plead and press a public cause. In Ireland, however, there have been greater and exceptional reasons to bring the advocate into the forefront as the political leader. The man who could "run a coach and four through any act of Parliament," as O'Connell boasted he could do; who could put down the Attorney-General and baffle the Crown,

who was ready to take the brief of the weak against the strong, to compel justice for the poor, was inevitably marked out for popularity amongst a people like the Irish. His skill, his learning, his eloquence, his ingenuity, were all tested, exhibited, and proved before their eyes. Moreover, in no generation has Ireland been without the exciting spectacle of State trials or political prosecutions. The accused stepped from the dock to the scaffold, from the cell to the convict ship, bequeathing names and memories destined to immortality in rustic ballad or fireside story, and the advocate who defended them, especially if supposed to sympathise with them, became a hero.

When one speaks of O'Connell's popularity, however, a qualification or distinction needs to be noted. It was almost exclusively confined to one section of the nation, though no doubt, counting heads, that was the overwhelming preponderance of the nation. Not only was O'Connell *un*popular with the Irish Protestants, he was absolutely a terror to them. Many other Irish national leaders before his time, in his time, and since, might be named whose following was somewhat distributed through the various sections, creeds, and classes of Irishmen; notably Henry Grattan, John Martin,

and Isaac Butt. But to the Protestants of his day O'Connell seemed a combination of Guy Fawkes, the Pretender, and the Pope of Rome. While his trial was proceeding, or rather concluding, in 1844, an old gentleman named Ffolliott—a good type of the staunch old Tory of that day in Ireland—lay dying in a southern county.

"Do you rest all your hopes on the merits of your Saviour, Mr. Ffolliott?" said the rector, who stood by his bedside.

"Yes I do, all," murmured the dying man.

"And are you directing all your thoughts at this moment to the heavenly Jerusalem, Mr. Ffolliott?"

"And nowhere else."

"Above all, I trust you forgive every one, and feel at peace with all men?"

"With all mankind," responded the genial old fox-hunter.

There was a solemn pause.

"Mr. Halliday," he half-whispered, "is the Dublin mail in yet?"

"Yes, sir, about an hour ago."

The dying man roused himself instantly, and with sharp eagerness asked, "How about the trials? Is O'Connell convicted?"

"Found guilty, sir."

"Thanks be to God!" was the last pious ejaculation of the worthy old squire.

All this love and confidence, all this fear and hatred, had been earned by O'Connell in his "Emancipation" career, which extended from 1810, when he may be said to have entered public life, to 1829, when he vanquished utterly and completely the hostile power of the Peel-Wellington Government. From 1830 to 1840 he was engaged in the scarcely less important struggles which ensued on the Tithe question and Municipal Reform—corollaries, so to speak, of Catholic Emancipation.

On the subject of Repeal O'Connell's first public speech was delivered; and this question, not Catholic Emancipation, attracted his earliest sympathies. To many ears the statement will sound strange and startling, but it is historical fact, that at that time the ultra-Protestant and Tory party in Ireland were the great agitators for Repeal of the Union. The anti-Union resolutions of the Orange lodges would fill pages of print. The Protestant bankers and merchants of Dublin vied with the Protestant nobility and gentry of the provinces in denouncing the Union. Never for

a moment did its effectuation cause an altered view of the transaction. As there was no disguise made of the heavy sums paid for the votes requisite to secure a ministerial majority, the people viewed the transaction very much as New York citizens regarded a "presentment" of Tweed's Grand Jury, thirteen of whom he kept in his pay; a bold and successful fraud in the guise of law. The Catholics at this time could hardly be said to be participants in general political affairs; still, although their bishops* were more than suspected of Unionist sentiments, the feelings of the general body were enthusiastically with their Protestant fellow-countrymen. The movement for Repeal of the Union was really begun in 1810 by a requisition from the Grand Jurors of Dublin to the High Sheriffs, Sir Edward Stanley and Sir James Riddall, calling upon them to convene a public meeting of "the freemen and freeholders of Dublin" for the purpose of petitioning Parliament to repeal the hateful and injurious act. At this meeting, held on the 18th of September 1810, the ultra-Protestant and Tory merchants and

* Pitt had promised them that Catholic Emancipation should be one of the first acts passed in the Imperial Parliament; but of course the promise was not fulfilled.

gentry of Dublin launched the movement which O'Connell, thirty years after, made his own.

How, then, it may be asked, did the question happen to lose its strongly Protestant character? How did young O'Connell and his co-religionists come to devote themselves first to Emancipation rather than Repeal?

O'Connell often subsequently expressed his regret that he and they had not, in 1810, thrown themselves to the side of the Protestant Repealers, and looked for Emancipation to an Irish rather than to an imperial legislature. "Restore the penal laws, if you will; but repeal the Union" was his vehement exclamation in after years. But in 1810 the Irish Catholics had abundant offers of assistance for Emancipation from a powerful party in the imperial Parliament; while in that assembly no party would help either Protestant or Catholic Irishmen with Repeal. The consideration was strongly attractive to strive first for what was nearest at hand, or was most practicable of attainment. The English Liberal party persuaded the Irish Catholic leaders to go for Emancipation, which was "already half-carried," and in which they could aid them. "First gain equality as citizens," said persuasive counsellors, "and then, if you will, use your powers as free

men to co-operate with your Protestant fellow-countrymen in their efforts for Repeal." In this view O'Connell acquiesced. He little thought that amidst the fierce fires of the struggle for religious equality the Protestant movement for Repeal was to disappear! When Emancipation was won; when the Tithe grievance was moderated, and the Protestant rector no more went forth with armed men to seize "every tenth sheaf" from the Catholic peasants' haggard; when the municipal corporations of the country were, like Parliament itself, opened to Catholics, and citizenship was at length secured, O'Connell felt that the time had come for a still greater question than any of these; one upon which he fondly, but erroneously, imagined he could unite Catholic and Protestant Irishmen. He looked around for the Repeal Protestants; but they were gone.

There was no avoiding the determination which he then adopted—to take into his own hands the banner which the Protestant chiefs had flung down. Although a study of all the circumstances, by the light of subsequent experience, shows us that the leader who won Catholic Emancipation could not have been the man to carry Repeal, no other course was honourably open to O'Connell

and the Irish Catholics. Had they adopted as their motto "Rest and be thankful"; having won religious rights, had they stopped there, the Protestants would be able for ever to taunt them with having belied the solemn declarations of 1810, which pledged them to consecrate their first efforts as free men to the non-sectarian question of a national legislature. "These Catholics," it would be said, "think only of their Church. Having freed their Church, they are satisfied, and leave their country to shift for itself."

When he launched his Repeal agitation O'Connell strove hard to propitiate Irish Protestantism; but he strove in vain. He saw but too well that in the new struggle there must be a blending of creeds; that the movement must be national not sectional, or it would fail. But it became plain that the very circumstances that gave to him his unrivalled power with the masses fatally disqualified him here. The time was all too near a struggle so desperate and bitter as that in which he and his despised "Popish bogtrotters" had vanquished the haughty Protestant aristocracy of the island. When they saw the man who had stormed and carried the strongholds of exclusive Protestant power coming forward at last to claim the restoration of

the Irish parliament (though a claim which they themselves had been most vehemently raising previously), they went frantic with alarm. "He now," they cried, "wants a Popish parliament, to doom us all to the gibbet and stake!" And so, for the first time in their history, they became Unionists, through fear of "Dan O'Connell and the Pope!"

O'Connell soon found how great a change thirty or forty years had made in the attitude of parties and the bearing of public questions. In 1805 or 1810, or even in 1820, it was but a comparatively short and easy step to revert to the familiar institution, so recently overthrown, of King, Lords, and Commons of Ireland. "Repeal" meant simply the repeal of an act of Parliament a few years old; a proceeding which would replace things as they stood, as it were, but yesterday. No new machinery would be needed. It was merely that once more, as before, the Viceroy would proceed in state from Dublin Castle to the Parliament House in College Green, and read the royal speech to the peers and commoners of Ireland. A few years of illegal interregnum would be forgotten in the general joy. Everything would go on as it did previously. There would be the same

franchises, the same representation, the same forms, the same domestic and international relations.

But after forty years had passed, it was found this could not be said. Things had happened in the interval which rendered a return to the old arrangements, pure and simple, an impossibility. The very reforms which O'Connell had been throughout those forty years labouring to accomplish forbade a restoration of the old forms and institutions. Catholic Emancipation enabled Catholics to sit in Parliament; whereas in the Irish legislature none but Protestants could have a place. The Reform Bill of 1832 revolutionised the old franchise and representative systems; and elections to an Irish parliament on any but the new ones would be out of the question. It was clear that new arrangements would have to be made; that a mere repeal of the Union Act, throwing things back upon their old forms of existence, would be absurd if not impracticable.

O'Connell's demand, therefore, meant a great deal more than Repeal; for he claimed not merely to annul the Act of Union, but to supplant or supplement the ancient forms and franchises, checks and counterchecks, by the important changes which an imperial legislature had in the interval decreed

and effected. This gave the Government a clever advantage in argument. "In an exclusively Protestant Irish parliament," they said, "England, as a Protestant country, had a certain amount of security for the connection; but under a new arrangement, to allow the pre-Union powers to an Irish parliament predominantly Catholic would afford no such guarantee." In any case the Government party would have resisted the demand for Repeal; but this demand for Repeal *and something more* they were sure to combat with all the greater determination.

O'Connell felt the difficulty, and vainly sought to parry it by declaring he would be satisfied that Catholic Emancipation should be undone if it stood in the way; but this was not to be seriously entertained. One can hardly credit that the Catholics would submit to it. He had only to push on with his agitation as best he could, laying absurd stress on what he called "the golden link of the crown," and claiming that the two parliaments (Irish and British) would soon come to an amicable arrangement on all points of common interest. Perhaps they might; perhaps they might not. The imperialists, however, were not likely to commit themselves to the hazard of what a predominantly

Catholic Irish parliament might or might not do with powers as wide or vague as those possessed by the Protestant Irish parliament of 1782.

There can be no doubt that had O'Connell adopted the course taken by the Home Rulers of 1870, and proposed those international arrangements, compromises, adjustments, and guarantees explicitly beforehand, he would have considerably allayed the apprehensions and disarmed the hostility which so invincibly encountered his movement. At one time he intimated his intention of doing so; but the popular feeling in favour of the old name and the old form of the national demand seemed too strong. He feared to let the people think he meant to abate a jot of his claim for "Repeal," *i.e.*, Repeal *plus* Catholic Emancipation and Electoral and Corporate Reform; but from that hour he must have felt that he was fighting on the wrong line and at fatal disadvantage.

The affection and gratitude of the Irish people for "the Liberator"—and well he earned both at their hands—will not allow much freedom in criticising his plans or his policy, his conduct or his character. In that character there were some features and elements that would not command admiration in these later days, but which never-

theless went to make up his qualifications for the task he undertook. He was the man for his age and time; the man for the special work and mission which he was assigned to fulfil. In many respects he would be sadly out of place in the public life of 1877; but no man of 1877 could accomplish the herculean labours of his career. True greatness of soul and courage indomitable alone could have carried him through the difficulties which he cheerfully faced and triumphantly encountered. Forlorn indeed were the fortunes of the Irish Catholics when, surrendering brilliant professional prospects, and sacrificing every other ambition, he devoted his life to the formidable enterprise of effecting their redemption. When he entered public affairs, and for a long time afterwards, he was the object of dislike and hostility on the part of many of the Catholic prelates and most of the Catholic gentry in Ireland. They denounced him as a "demagogue." Again and again our "upper class" Catholics assured the Government of the day and the people of England that the "extreme" ideas of violent agitators about Emancipation were to them, as moderate men and loyal citizens, positively distressing. A hundred years and more of the Penal Code had done its work

with these men. They trembled lest new commotions might wrest from them the comparative tolerance they now enjoyed. "Your Grace will, I hope, not deem me accountable for the foolishness of those who address me as 'My Lord,'" wrote a Catholic archbishop of O'Connell's time to the Duke of Wellington. Leave to live seemed a great deal to men whose youth had seen the "discoverer" and the "priest-hunter" at work.*

* "Discoverers" were men who prowled through the country seeking out grounds for the filing of "bills of discovery," as they were called, against Papists holding property; or against Protestants who held lands in secret trust for Papist neighbours. It is said the ancestral estates of the Bryans of Jenkinstown, a prominent and wealthy Catholic family, were preserved from confiscation throughout the whole of the eighteenth century by the chivalrous honour and fidelity of the Marquises of Ormonde, who were Protestants. These held the title deeds in their own names from father to son through a hundred years, secretly handing over the rents, until the Bryans at last were free by law openly to hold and enjoy their broad domains. It was in this way, by the noble conduct of individual Protestants in an age of dreadful edicts, that nearly every acre of ancient Catholic estates, of any that survive to our time, was saved to the "Popish" proprietors.

"Priest-hunters" were a class who made a livelihood by earning the rewards for hunting up concealed priests. The western and northern counties of Ireland abounded thirty years ago with the traditions of these priest-hunts. In my own native district every tourist to Glengariffe is shown the Priest's

O'Connell, whose eloquence was massive and rugged, sometimes coarse, and rarely classical, answered back the Catholic aristocracy with vituperation and scorn for their slavishness and cowardice. The bishops he studiously passed by. He had at his back a few of the Catholic gentry, nearly all the Catholic mercantile and middle classes, many of the secular or parochial clergy, and the religious orders to a man. As for the humbler classes, it is hardly an exaggeration to say that every man, woman, and child was ready to die for him.

Some of his most distinguished colleagues of the

Leap Mountain, or "Leam-a-thagart." Here according to local tradition, which had no more pious and awe-struck believer than myself, a great miracle was wrought. A holy priest, who had long eluded the search of those who sought his blood, was riding along a lonely bridle-path which still exists, when he was suddenly confronted by the "Shanna soggarth." "Aha! your reverence, I have you at last," laughed the pursuer. But the priest, taking out his breviary, read three words in Latin, and struck spurs into the horse, which sprang through the air and never came down till he reached Donemark Wood, six miles distant, where the mark of his knees and of the priest's thumb and four fingers are still to be seen in the rock on which he alighted. Many a time and oft I have seen these proofs of the story, and I do not greatly rejoice in the day when I realised that the rain-drip from an aged oak had worn those marks in the stone.

Emancipation campaign (notably Richard Lalor Shiel) refused to follow him into the Repeal movement. Others, largely from personal devotion as well as political conviction, kept their places by his side. It was tame work, however, some of them protested, compared with the "old times," when after every banquet or public meeting there was generally, somehow, an invitation to "meet" some one in "the Fifteen Acres, be the same more or less." O'Connell, after the fatal encounter in which he shot D'Esterre, made and kept a solemn vow never more to send or accept a challenge—a circumstance which had a powerful influence in banishing political duelling from Ireland. This non-combatant style of agitation was viewed with great disgust by such men as the O'Gorman Mahon, who had been "out" no less than thirteen times. O'Connell one day, at the Repeal Association, delivered a speech in reply to a political attack designed to bring about a "message," in which he reaffirmed his resolution to accept no challenge during the rest of his life; making at the same time some exceedingly pious observations on the sinfulness of the practice he had relinquished. "Mr. Chairman," said the O'Gorman Mahon, when O'Connell had sat down, "I think it may

be useful to state that *I* have made no such resolution: 'God forbid!'"*

* About three years ago we were startled in Ireland by the reappearance of this typical veteran of the Emancipation and Repeal times. For a quarter of a century no one had seen or heard of him; when lo! his tall, soldierly figure, broad-shouldered and erect as an uplifted lance—with snow-white hair copiously flowing over his shoulders—appeared like a vision in our midst, at the Home Rule Conference of 1873. On that occasion he was one of a dozen guests dining with a leading Home Rule member of Parliament; two Catholic clergymen being of the number. Our conversation turned on those strange times when a man was liable any day to be called to meet death for some fancied ground of challenge in a political speech; and especially the number of occasions on which our friend Colonel the O'Gorman Mahon had to face such an ordeal. To do him justice he himself was rigidly reticent; seemed not to relish these references to his duelling experiences at all. One of the clergymen thought the colonel's feelings might have been wounded by our strong censures of duelling, and he proceeded to soothe matters a little:—

"I can well understand, however," said he, "how, in a time when society enforced such a shocking code, a man might feel, as it were, compelled—left no choice, when subjected to a challenge. Refusal meant disgrace, social ostracism. In fact the blame attaching to a man who, not sending but *receiving* a challenge, went out under this sense of compulsion, was, to say the least——"

The colonel could stand this no longer. "Gentlemen," said he, rising to his feet, "I feel bound to declare on my honour as a gentleman that though, unfortunately as I may say, I have been many times a principal in a hostile meeting, never once did I receive a challenge. *I always was the challenger!*" A

In the course of O'Connell's career there first appeared in the Irish political arena a figure, an element of force, which more than any other has excited the English imagination—"the Irish priest in politics." That figure, as we beheld it some thirty years ago, will henceforth be seen no more. Not one of all the wondrous changes which time has wrought marks more strongly the difference between the old Ireland and the new than the altered attitude, position, and attributes of the priest in politics. He has not quitted the arena. No hostile action, no subsidence of confidence, has affected him. But he stands in new—utterly and completely new—relations, politically speaking, towards the people. Those who have looked at this historical character from a distance have strangely misread it. To Englishmen the despotic power wielded by the Irish priest in politics—the implicit way in which the people obeyed and followed him—could but seem a woful spectacle of clerical tyranny on the one hand and slavish subserviency on the other. But that power and that obedience arose out of

roar of laughter at the discomfiture of the reverend friend, who was, as he thought, suggesting a charitable exculpation of the colonel, hailed the resentful disclaimer of the old campaigner

the peculiar circumstances of the time; and as out of and with them they arose, so with them they have passed away.

When O'Connell, the young, daring, duel-fighting, eloquent, and fearless lawyer, took up the cause of the Catholic serfs, timidity or selfishness on the part of the few better-class co-religionists had left the people, so to speak, derelict. The abstract justice of their cause, the cruel weight of their fetters, had indeed won for them the sympathies of great and noble men in a legislature exclusively Protestant; but they were talked of and pleaded for very much as the negroes were talked of and pleaded for by Wilberforce or Horace Greely. Whether they really were or were not men and brothers was a great part of the question. What ought to be done, or might be done, *for* them was constantly debated. The man and brother arising in his chains and stalking into the political arena to do something *for himself* startled every one like a portentous apparition.

What happened then was exactly what would have happened had the Irish been Baptists, Presbyterians, Methodists, or episcopalian Protestants in the same plight, instead of Catholics. Usually, even in a country where education and political

rights are widely diffused, the middle and upper classes become the political leaders of the people around them whose national and religious sympathies are more or less their own. In such a state of things, the appearance of the clergyman as a political leader in a special and prominent way would, very naturally, be a cause for wonder. But this was not the case with the Catholic masses in Ireland forty years ago. No identity of feeling, political or religious, linked them and the gentry class in a community of interest. They were unlettered, unenfranchised, bereft of the natural leaders of a people. In every parish, however, there was one man (and in many *only* one man) of their own way of thinking who had education and ability, was independent of Government, and was devoted to them—nay, recommended to their confidence by a thousand considerations. He was not only clergyman and pastor; he was local lawgiver and arbitrator, monitor and judge, counsellor and adviser—the one advocate and protector whose every energy they well knew would readily be devoted to their weal. If haply in one parish out of ten there were to be found a Catholic or two of the gentleman class, when the novel idea of the people moving in political affairs was pro-

pounded these propertied few cowered in alarm, and trembled lest the Government should be angry. *The priest* was the one man whom the simple and unschooled but resolute peasant felt he might endow with an unrestricted proxy. Experience soon came to tell him that by implicitly trusting and obeying this political proxy-holder, rights were won and disabilities swept away in the devious and difficult ways of public conflict. The priests themselves, who at first very reluctantly (and most often despite the displeasure of their pusillanimous bishops) assumed these new functions and responsibilities, began to grow more bold and confident under the incitements and encouragement of O'Connell. At length they became the agency through which he organised and moved the whole kingdom. They thought for their flocks; acted and spoke for them; told them what to do, and it was done; how to vote, and so they voted; who in the big world outside was their foe, and him they hated; who their friend, and him they blessed.

Enormous was the power thus thrown into the hands of the Irish priests. The result certainly was not all unmixed good. Abuses inevitably came. In some cases, few indeed, the possession of such authority led to arrogance and despotism. In

others its exercise was so mingled with what was of spiritual character, that evils of no small magnitude arose to the view of thoughtful politicians looking on. Yet must impartial judgment declare that never in political affairs was influence so great, on the whole so unselfishly and so faithfully used in the interests of those for whom it was possessed. It was a prerogative that could only have arisen under abnormal conditions of society; a power that could not be coexistent with widely diffused education and self-reliant political action on the part of the people. Necessity called it forth; with necessity it disappeared.

Under such circumstances, sustained by such allies, O'Connell, the object of popular worship and aristocratic aversion, pushed on his agitation. The movement, as he shaped and guided it, must inevitably have fallen with his own life, so large a part of it was he. His policy was to maintain in Ireland a state of things which was neither peace nor war; that baulked the commander-in-chief and harassed the prime minister. Strange to say, though rousing the people to the utmost pitch of excitement, the dominant anxiety of his soul was to keep them out of the meshes of the law—to avert collision, so that he, their leader, might fight

the law within the law. By such tactics he had won Emancipation; by a repetition of them he hoped to carry Repeal. But the strain was too great on the energies of a nation to keep up a tension so severe as that which this policy involved. It was politics at high pressure, an excitement difficult to be maintained. Irishmen had not yet learned how much superior to the exertion of enthusiasm is the less demonstrative but more telling strength of patient plodding perseverance.

O'Connell again and again promised his followers success—absolute and infallible success—on the sole condition of obeying his directions; and, in an hour of weakness or rashness, he announced that "within six months" Repeal would be won. In that moment it was all over with O'Connell and Repeal. The Government needed but to tide over a year or two, and the great tribune was discredited, the spell of his influence broken. But they did more. They boldly assumed the offensive, resorting to some steps which would hardly be tolerated by public opinion in our time. On the threshold of the movement the Lord Lieutenant of the day announced that no Repealer would be appointed to a Government situation. 'Twas a keen thrust this, but not mortal; it had no very

appreciable effect. Later on, however, came the extreme course of summarily dismissing from the commission of the peace every county magistrate who identified himself in any way with Repeal politics. To parry this blow, O'Connell set up popular arbitration courts all over the kingdom, leaving the petty sessions bench "high and dry." The Government announced that they were determined to put down Repeal; O'Connell answered by defying them. He called a monster meeting to petition the Queen on the plains of Clontarf, memorable as the site of the great battle in which Ard-Ri Brian I. overthrew the Danish power in 1014. The Government, in the dusk of the evening preceding the appointed day, issued a proclamation forbidding the assemblage, and the hour of meeting found the city occupied by horse, foot, and artillery. By strenuous exertions the Repeal leader and his friends were able, during the night and morning, to intercept the tens of thousands of people from the surrounding counties marching to the spot, where, had they arrived, a collision was inevitable. O'Connell charged the executive with designing a Peterloo on a monster scale, and threatened to impeach Peel, Wellington, and Earl de Grey. They retorted by dealing him a still

heavier blow. They arrested him and some of his principal associates — his son, John O'Connell; Charles Gavan Duffy, of the *Nation*; Dr. Gray, of the *Freeman*; Tom Steele; T. M. Ray; R. Barrett, of the *Pilot*; the Rev. Mr. Tyrrell and the Rev. Mr. Tierney—on a charge of seditious conspiracy. Eighteen hundred and forty-four—the "Repeal year," as O'Connell, six months before, boastfully said it should be called—found the great tribune a prisoner in Richmond jail!

In selecting the jury at his trial, it was discovered that several leaves or slips of the long panel list had been *lost*, the Crown lawyers said; *stolen*, the traversers declared. The Attorney-General contended that it made no great matter; there were names enough to go on with. The court agreed with him: the trial proceeded, the accused were found guilty and sentenced to various fines and terms of imprisonment. A writ of error was carried to the House of Lords, mainly on the point as to the lost or stolen slips of the jury list. What the Irish judges solemnly decided to be trivial and immaterial, the law-lords at Westminster declared to be all-important and of the vital essence of trial by jury. "Were such things to be allowed," Lord Denman said, "trial by jury

would become a mockery, a delusion, and a snare." The conviction was quashed, and O'Connell and his fellow-prisoners were borne from prison in a triumphal procession, eclipsing any public demonstration ever previously seen in Ireland.

So much merely epitomises the history of that eventful time. Behind and alongside of all this, however, there were causes and influences at work which of themselves were certain to eventuate in important political changes. By 1846 a transition period had dawned in Irish politics. Already the schools and the newspapers were beginning to make themselves felt. O'Connell became aware that there was growing up around him a new generation, who chafed under the benevolent despotism of his leadership, and who objected to his canon of "implicit obedience," unless they had first reasoned out matters. He was now an old man, no longer the dashing, high-spirited young Kerryman of Emancipation days; he trembled for the possible indiscretions of these fiery orators and seditiously patriotic poets who were rapidly infusing their bold spirit into the multitude. In his own hot youth he could praise Tell and Hofer, and erstwhile glow with admiration for the three hundred at Thermopylæ. But, sore wounded by

the failure of his promises, the defeat of his policy, and oppressed with gloomy misgivings as to the possibility of averting much longer a collision between the people and the Government, he could not endure these things now. He called the young orators and poets the "war party," but he did them wrong. Not one of them, at that date, dreamt of war or a resort to physical force. Solicitous for the legal safety of the Repeal Association, he drew up test resolutions, which impliedly, if not expressly, condemned as wrongful any and every effort, in any age or time, clime or country, to redress political wrongs by armed resort. These resolutions were aimed at the men already known as the "Young Ireland" party, intellectually the flower of the Repeal movement; men whose genius adorned, and whose labours elevated and refined, Irish politics. They offered readily to subscribe such resolutions as applied to their own aims and purposes; but they refused, they said, to stigmatise the men of other times and other struggles. With this O'Connell would not be content, and an expulsion or secession, destined to have enduring effects on Irish politics, rent the Repeal Association in twain.

To the superficial view of most English poli-

ticians all this was merely "an Irish row," a political squabble. In like events occurring in Belgium or Italy or France the philosophy of politics would be studied. The supreme advantages which sometimes indubitably attend the concentration of political power and authority in the hands of one man are purchased by heavy hazards and penalties. When age has weakened the master mind, dissidence becomes more and more intolerable, adulation more and more pleasing in his ears. Obsequiousness is called fidelity; honest independence is suspected as disloyalty. The grand old tribune of the Irish people, failing physically and mentally, became the sport of whispered jealousies and suspicions. Accustomed to wield unquestioned authority and to receive implicit obedience, he could see, under the inspirations then swaying him, in the disciples of the new school of thought merely so many plotting aspirants envious of his throne.

But apart from all this a calamity was now at hand beneath which everything was to go down. The famine of 1846–47 swept the land like a storm of destruction. At such a moment political agitation or political organisation would be as much out of place as amongst the terrified occu-

pants of a raft, or the victims in a house on fire. The wild scramble for life, for mere existence, overmastered every other purpose. It seemed as if society would be resolved into its first elements. Aghast, appalled, O'Connell gazed on the ruin of the cause—the destruction of the people he had given his life to serve. In the agony of his soul he flung himself into the one supreme effort to save them. No more he thundered defiance. He wept, he prayed—he cried aloud, "O God! thy faithful people perish!" The struggle was too much. The great heart and the grand brain gave way. Mournfully, despairingly the old man sank into the tomb. He had lived too long; he had seen the wreck of all he loved. To Rome, to Rome he would bend his way; he would see the successor of St. Peter and visit the shrines of the Apostles before he might die. Not so God willed that it should be. At "Genoa the Superb" he halted on the way; "to rest a little," he said. The attendants saw that his great rest was at hand. On the 15th of May 1847 all was over: the "Irish Liberator" was no more.

Gloomy ending to a great career! Concurrence of fatalities! One now can see that even before the first shadow of famine fell upon the scene a

catastrophe was inevitable. The great organisation that so largely embodied the national hopes and purposes was virtually at an end. After the Young Ireland secession the Government had need no more to concern itself with its once formidable foe. O'Connell's power in the future was broken. But nothing could take from his brow the laurels of the past. He had played his part; he had nobly done his allotted work. "I ought to have fallen at Waterloo," said Napoleon regretfully at St. Helena. O'Connell ought to have died in "Twenty-nine"; or perhaps on the great day of Tara, in Eighteen hundred and forty-three.

CHAPTER IV.

THE RIBBON CONFEDERACY.

THROUGHOUT the half-century extending from 1820 to 1870, a secret oath-bound agrarian confederacy, known as the "Ribbon Society," was the constant affliction and recurring terror of the landed classes of Ireland. The Vehmgericht itself was not more dreaded. The Maffia did not more mysteriously baffle and defy suppression. The lord in his castle, the peasant in his hut, were alike made to feel the existence of its hateful power.

I think it can be shown that for more than a hundred years—ever since the commencement of the last century—secret agrarian confederacies of one sort or another have existed in Ireland, all having their source and origin in the miseries and feuds incidental to a vicious land system. Few of them, however, attained to the dimensions of

the Ribbon Conspiracy; none of them lived so long.

It is assuredly strange—indeed, almost incredible—that although the existence of this organisation was, in a general way, as well and as widely known as the fact that Queen Victoria reigned, or that Daniel O'Connell was once a living man; although the story of its crimes has thrilled judge and jury, and parliamentary committees have filled ponderous blue-books with evidence of its proceedings, there is to this hour the widest conflict of assertion and conclusion as to what exactly were its real aims, its origin, structure, character, and purpose.

The most prevalent idea is that it related solely or mainly to transactions in land, and was "non-political," that is, had no design against the Government; but this impression can be the result of no very special knowledge or investigation of the subject. Whatever Ribbonism developed into subsequently, it is the fact that at an early stage it was held out to be "political" in the sense above-referred to. It would, perhaps, be more correct to say that in some parts of Ireland, or at some period of its existence, it professed to be an organisation of that character; for I long ago satisfied myself

that the Ribbonism of one period was not the Ribbonism of another; that the version of its aims and character prevalent amongst its own members in one county or district differed widely from that existing elsewhere. In Ulster it professed to be a defensive or retaliatory league against Orangeism. In Munster it was at first a combination against tithe-proctors. In Connaught it was an organisation against rack-renting and evictions. In Leinster it often was mere trade-unionism, dictating by its mandates and enforcing by its vengeance the employment or dismissal of workmen, stewards, and even domestics. This latter phase generally preceded the disappearance of the system in a particular locality, and was evidently the lowest and basest form to which it sank or rotted in decay. Everywhere and at all times Ribbonism had, no doubt, certain general forms or features in common. Some of these were very remarkable. In the first place, although at one time, and in some localities, it affected to be a political organisation for national designs, there cannot be found in the records of its proceedings evidence or trace of participation in them by any persons of social position or education above a very humble grade; and I need hardly remark that at

no period of Irish history could this be said of really political conspiracies. The Ribbon Society seems to have been wholly confined to small farmers, cottiers, labourers, and, in the towns, petty shopkeepers, in whose houses the "lodges" were held. Its documents, correspondence, rules, passwords, and addresses betray in most instances the grossest illiteracy; although the construction and management of the organisation exhibited much cleverness, activity, vigilance, and resource. The next singular fact is that although from the inception, or first appearance, of Ribbonism the Catholic clergy waged a determined war upon it —denouncing it from the altar, and going so far as to refuse the sacraments to its adherents—the society was exclusively Catholic. Under no circumstances would a Protestant be admitted to membership; nay, any person nearly related to, or connected with, a Protestant was disqualified. This is about the only feature which seems to have been universally prevalent and invincibly retained in the hundred forms of Irish Ribbonism. The fact has, however, led to some utterly erroneous ideas as to the alleged sanguinary sectarian designs of the organisation, and has encouraged the concoction of some rather

stupidly forged "Ribbon oaths." One of these was cited by Mr. Monk, in the House of Commons, on the 18th of March 1871, and ran as follows:—

> By virtue of the oath I have taken I will aid and assist with all my mind and strength, when called upon, to massacre Protestants and cut away heretics, burn British churches, and abolish Protestant kings and princes, and all others except the Church of Rome and this system. * * * And I also feel bound to believe that there is no absolution to be had from the Pope of Rome or any other authority belonging to that Church, or that which is to come, from any breach of this test.

The spuriousness of this production was instantly perceived and pointed out in Ireland. The person who composed it was not only not a Catholic (as a Ribbonman would necessarily have been), but he was ignorant of the way in which Catholics invariably refer to topics touched on in the alleged oath. They never speak or write of their own Church as "that" Church; and the "Pope of Rome" is a Protestant, not a Catholic, phrase in Ireland. An Irish peasant would scarcely know what was meant by a "British church." Indeed, the Irish Chief Secretary (Lord Hartington) admitted that though the police had found a copy of such an oath in a house near Mullingar,

its authenticity was not accepted in Dublin Castle.

Of genuine Ribbon oaths—those the use of which in the lodges was actually deposed to—there is a confusing plenty; and a contrast of these will amply corroborate my statement that the real origin, character, and aims of the combination have baffled discovery; or that there were various Ribbon systems, radically differing one from another. Between 1820 and 1870 there have been put in evidence, or sworn to in "informations," more than a score of irreconcilable Ribbon oaths. Some, for instance, set out by pledging the most devoted fealty to the Queen; others by swearing allegiance to "Daniel O'Connell, real King of Ireland, and his eldest son, Maurice O'Connell, our Chief Commander." Of these two oaths, or classes of oaths, various versions have been given, not merely by "approvers" in the witness-box, but from written documents seized at lodge meetings. The explanation of all this very probably is that the local officials of the society in many places added some words of their own. The general features of the oath seemed to be to keep the secrets of the society; implicit obedience to its officers; readiness to

assemble and execute commands "at two hours' notice"; pledge to assist any fellow-member being beaten or ill-treated. In several versions the oath contained a clause binding the members "never to drink to excess so as to endanger the divulging of secrets."

Not long since I was shown a printed report (now, I believe, very rare) of the trial in Dublin in 1840 of Richard Jones, the first high officer—indeed I believe the first member—of the Ribbon Society whom the Government were able to convict, after nearly twenty years of fruitless endeavours to grapple with the system. In this publication frequent reference is made to a book found on the prisoner, in which he had copied in shorthand characters most of his secret correspondence with the lodges and lodge officers, as well as the signs, passwords, rules, and regulations of the society. The Government did not divulge on the trial all that the book contained; but they caused to be executed for their private information a full copy of its contents, probably the most complete and authentic revelation they were able to obtain, before or since, of the character, designs, and transactions of the Ribbon Society. Government documents are not always carefully kept. That

identical manuscript translation of Jones's secret book is this moment in my possession.*

Jones was clerk to a salesmaster in Smithfield Market, Dublin, and filled the office of general secretary for Ireland in the Ribbon system. In truth he appears to have been the ruling spirit of the society. A perusal of this correspondence certainly shows that Ribbonism was then being established with political aims or pretensions. Jones, who, though a man of humble education, plainly possessed considerable ability and force of character, appears on the face of these communications to have been nothing of the vulgar and venal villain which most Ribbon organisers are assumed to have been. From first to last he is energetically repressing discords, counselling union, and directing the expulsion of bad and doubtful characters. I find no trace of selfish gain or profit to himself—quite the contrary—in the whole story; while as to the aims of the confederacy, though on this point there is wondrous vagueness and confusion, these letters are full

* I believe that documents of even a much more startling character have been dispersed through the waste-paper shops of Dublin since the death of a well-known Castle official a few years ago.

of allusions essentially political in their character. To "free Ireland"—to "liberate our country"—to "unite all Roman Catholics," are again and again mentioned, incidentally, as the great objects of the society. On the 24th of April 1838, Jones, writing to an official of the society in England, says, "Send us word immediately what is the determination of the friends belonging to the Hibernians in Liverpool. If they act for the welfare of their native land they will join with those persons whose wish it is to see their native land free. The motto of every honest Irishman should be 'Unite and free your native land.'" Nay, strange to say, I find in one of Jones's letters *not* read on the trial an observation which sounds curiously at the present moment. "The hour of England's difficulty is at hand," he tells them: "the Russian bear is drawing near to her in India." Again, on the 21st of May 1838, Andrew Dardis and Richard Jones, the grand master and grand secretary, write to a lodge master in the country, "We are happy to hear that the men of your county that were heretofore opposed to the interests of our native land are to meet you on the 27th for the purpose of causing unity of feeling." In fine, it is abundantly clear that, in

some hazy general way, the Ribbonmen of this period were induced to believe that the organisation was a political conspiracy against the Government, and not the mere agrarian combination which it subsequently proved to be.

The name "Ribbon" Society was not attached to it until about 1826. It was previously known as "Liberty Men"; the "Religious Liberty System"; the "United Sons of Irish Freedom"; "Sons of the Shamrock"; and by other names. From an early period there were rival Ribbon organisations bitterly opposing one another; and Jones's great concern seems to have been to put down this contention and effect a fusion.

The Government were fairly perplexed by the conflicting accounts sent in from time to time by the magistrates and police as to the society. Most of all were they bewildered by the stories supplied by their paid agents or "informers" in the ranks of the organisation. These latter were numerous enough, and their information, estimated as to quantity, was well worth the pay given for it; but the Government declared that in scarcely a single case or a single particular were they able to place any reliance on these stories. The informants seem to have known very little that could

be made evidence, but to have invented a great deal. Mr. Barnes, a stipendiary magistrate greatly trusted by the Government, writes as follows to the Chief Secretary as to one of these informants, whose stories the Lord Lieutenant wished him to probe :—

This man has been known to me since the month of October last; and from my knowledge of him I have no hesitation in designating him one of the most consummate and specious villains in all Ireland. He was formerly a policeman and discharged for misconduct; a Protestant, and turned to mass for the purpose, as he stated to me, of becoming a Ribbonman and betraying their secrets; was in my employment between four and five months as a secret agent to get me information; received in that time upwards of fifteen pounds from me, and ended our connection by stating, and offering to swear to his statement, that he himself was one of the party who murdered Morrison (Lord Lorton's bailiff), tendering himself to me as an approver, and claiming the "reward and pardon" offered by the proclamation. Knowing this statement to be false, I determined to have nothing more to do with the fellow, and accordingly ceased all communication with him.

Other magistrates were not quite so straight-laced as Mr. Barnes, and this "consummate and specious villain" found ready employment elsewhere as a police agent for the "detection" of Ribbonism. In this process there is but too much reason to conclude that he pursued a course unfortunately not rare in connection with secret

associations in Ireland—namely, that he enrolled members and organised or perpetrated outrages himself, then "divulged" to the authorities, and swore to conviction against his dupes and accomplices.*

A Mr. Hill Rowan, stipendiary magistrate, who seems to have made the discovery of Ribbonism his special labour, supplied the most copious information on the subject. In many respects he was, clearly, over-credulous. Even the Government considered him given to exaggeration; yet his revelations no doubt contained a great deal of truth. According to him, the society was the "Society of Confidential Ribbonmen." He gravely

* Mr. Faucett, Provost of Sligo, writes to the Lord Lieutenant of one of these informants whom he was asked to report upon privately: "He is a doubtful sort of person, on whose uncorroborated testimony no reliance should be placed; and it appears to me his object is to get or earn money by his information." Mr. Brownrigg, provincial inspector of constabulary, reporting another of them says: "He is a man of very bad character." Of yet another—"I have been informed by persons on whom reliance can be placed that he is a man of the very worst character." Of another the stipendiary magistrate (Mr. O'Brien) says: "Mr. Jones admitted there could not be any use made of his evidence. Mr. Brownrigg and I came to the conclusion that he was not telling one word of truth, but that his object was to get money." Numerous such cases might be cited.

narrates how one of his informants—no doubt belonging to the class above referred to—testified that it was first formed by Lord Edward Fitzgerald, in 1798; that "its present objects were to dethrone the Queen; to place Daniel O'Connell, the member of Parliament for Dublin, as Catholic king of Ireland in her stead; to put down and destroy the Protestant religion in Ireland; and to restore the forfeited estates that were usurped by Oliver Cromwell, a list of which is kept by the Catholic priests, to their owners." The society extended all over Ireland, and was governed by a body called the "Grand Ribband Lodge of Ireland" this body being comprised of representatives of the different county organisations. Quarterly returns of the number of members were made by every parish. Over each parish there was a "Parochial Committee" of twelve, including the "Parish Master." A delegate from each such committee in a barony formed the "Baronial Lodge." All orders of the society were to be obeyed under penalty of death. The members in each county were known to each other by signs and passwords, which were issued by the grand lodge every month, but changed as often as the existing or current passes ("goods" they were

called) might be discovered by the police. There were salutation phrases and "quarrelling words"; that is, words which two men engaged in strife might use to ascertain whether they were not "brethren," and so bound to desist. Some of these grips and passwords ran as follows :—

(For October.)

Observation. The winter is approaching.
Reply. It is time to expect it.
O. Our foe is found out.
R. Our guardians are watchful.

(At night.)

O. The night is sharp.
R. It is time to expect it.

(Quarrelling.)

O. You make a mistake.
R. I am sorry for it.

(Sign.)

The right hand to the right knee.
The left thumb in the breeches' pocket.

It will be noted that the opening observation is always of a harmless commonplace nature, which if addressed to a stranger could occasion no suspicion. "The winter is approaching" is a remark not out of course in October. If the immediate response is "It is time to expect it," the first speaker has

reason to think he is talking to a brother Ribbonman. To make sure, he proceeds with a remark not likely to be understood unless by a fellow-member: "Our foe is found out." A reply declaring that "Our guardians are watchful" establishes brotherhood between the parties. The "quarrelling words" are similarly explained. Here are other forms:—

O. The days are getting long.
R. The life of man is getting short.
O. Have you got any news?
R. They are doing well in Canada.*

(Quarrelling.)

O. Don't be fond of quarrelling.
R. By no means.

Even at that time, forty years ago, Russia figured so largely in public politics as to find a place in these passwords:—

O. What is your opinion of the times?
R. I think the markets are on a rise.
O. Foreign war is the cause of it.
R. It's the Russians wish to tyrannise.
May the sons of Erin wherever they be
Continue ever in loyalty.

* The Canadian rebellion of M. Papineau was proceeding at the time.

(Night-word.)

Q. What is the age of the moon?

A. Really I don't know.

(Sign.)

Right hand rubbed across the forehead. To be answered by the left hand down the pocket.

The opening observation was, as I have pointed out, invariably harmless, and skilfully referred to some passing topic. Thus the troubles of the Melbourne ministry are brought in:—

O. What do you think of the Government?

R. They are much divided.

O. May Patrick's sons all persevere

R. To gain the rights of Granu Aile.*

Down to quite a recent period it was not unusual for persons in a rank of life far above the Ribbonmen to be indebted to some friendly member for protection and assistance by "loan" of the sign or password. The late Sir John Gray told me that when contesting Monaghan county in 1852, he found that his opponents in a particular district had purchased the support of the Ribbonmen as an election mob, and that passage through

* One of the figurative names of Ireland; actually the Gaelic for Grace O'Malley.

the town to the place of meeting would be denied him. He realised fully the dangers of appearing in the midst of these men; but in his last moments of despair a friend in need turned up. He was waited upon by a mysterious personage, who told him it would be "a disgrace to Ireland if the patriotic editor of the *Freeman's Journal* was bludgeoned in the street, or compelled to hide in his hotel." He thereupon confided to Sir John the current Ribbon signs, the first of which happened to be simply the drawing of the fingers of the right hand across the mouth. Sir John hesitated for an instant. Was this a trap to lure him into the midst of his enemies? He quickly dismissed the thought, and boldly sallied forth; his companions in the hotel, ignorant of the ægis confided to him, vainly endeavouring to dissuade him. A yell burst from the mob around the door when he emerged into the street, and hundreds of sticks rose in the air. He quietly lifted his hand to his mouth and gave the sign. "For barely a second," said he, telling me the story, "there flashed through my mind a horrible uncertainty; but by a supreme effort I maintained myself, and betrayed no symptom of alarm. Suddenly every voice was hushed, every weapon was lowered,

and a passage was opened out for me in the crowd, amidst which I quietly walked to the court-house, where the meeting was proceeding."

I myself have known instances in the course of what I call the rot of the system where the support or opposition of the Ribbonmen during an election was quite a matter of pounds, shillings, and pence. Mr. Richard Swift, who was returned member of Parliament for Sligo county in 1852 —one of the most faithful and worthy Englishmen who ever espoused the public service of Ireland—lost his re-election in 1857 notoriously because he refused to give a sum of money privately demanded as black-mail by the lodges. In other cases, I feel bound to admit, the Ribbonmen adopted a less venal course. They scorned to fight for pay.

But alas! when one comes to review the actual results of the Ribbon system in Ireland—to survey its bloody work throughout those fifty years—how frightful is the prospect! It has been said, and probably with some truth, that it has been too much the habit to attribute erroneously to the Ribbon organisation every atrocity committed in the country, every deed of blood apparently arising out of agrárian combination or conspiracy.

An emphatic denial, and challenge to proofs, have been given to stories of midnight trials and sentences of death at lodge meetings. Very possibly the records of lodge meetings afford no such proof, though there is abundant evidence that at such assemblages threatening notices and warnings were ordered to be served, and domiciliary visits for terrorising purposes were decreed. But vain is all pretence that the Ribbon Society did not become, whatever the original design or intentions of its members may have been, a hideous organisation of outrage and murder. It is one of the inherent evils of oath-bound secret societies of this kind, where implicit obedience to secret superiors is sworn, that they may very easily and quickly drop to the lowest level of demoralisation, and become associations for the wreaking of mere personal vengeance. Men who set themselves to the work of assassination, on any pretence, speedily become so depraved that life-taking ceases to have enormity in their eyes. There was a period when Ribbon outrages had, at all events, conceivable provocation; but there came a time when they sickened the public conscience by their wantonness. The vengeance of the society was ruthless and terrible. Some forty years ago the Catholic pea-

santry of Longford county were panic-stricken by the commencement of what looked like a settled design for their extermination, in order that a Protestant "plantation" might be established in their stead. Lord Lorton was accountable in the largest degree for this alarm, and the lamentable consequences which resulted. He commenced considerable evictions of his Catholic tenantry under circumstances of great hardship; handing over the farms thus cleared, in several consecutive instances, to Protestant new-comers. Popular panic no doubt exaggerated much as to what had been done and was intended; but enough was patent on the face of his proceedings to account for the wild excitement which arose. That excitement culminated in one of the most astonishing chapters of savage vengeance of which there is record in Ireland. Defending himself and explaining his course of action subsequently, Lord Lorton told the fate of the nine Protestant tenants—Brock, Diamond, Moorehead, Cole, Cathcart, Rollins, (another) Diamond, (another) Moorehead, and Morrison—whom he had planted on the evicted farms:—

"What became of Brock?"

"He was murdered, a very short time after he

had taken possession, close by his house, about six o'clock in the evening."

"What became of Diamond?"

"Diamond was attacked and very much injured. He is now in a disabled state."

"What became of Alexander Moorehead?"

"He had all his cattle destroyed in January."

"What became of Cole?"

"On his way to purchase stock he was stabbed and beaten in a most savage manner. His life was despaired of."

"What became of Cathcart?"

"On four different occasions he was fired at, and ultimately was shot dead near his own dwelling."

"What became of Rollins?"

"Rollins and the second Diamond lived together. Their stock was taken away, and was found killed, skinned, and buried in bog holes."

"What became of Hugh Moorehead?"

"He was murdered while sitting round the fire in the evening with his little family."

"What became of William Morrison?"

"He was murdered. An armed party attacked and murdered him in a house in Drumlish."

This terrible recapitulation enables one to realise

the bloody work of agrarian combinations. To me it certainly is peculiarly revolting because of the religious element which mingles in the story. Yet there is another side of the picture to be looked at. The guilt of one party is not lessened by the culpability of the other; but each has to be viewed. I have given in the words of that nobleman himself Lord Lorton's thrilling recital of the assassins' vengeance. Were I to set forth the accounts of his lordship's proceedings from the lips of the Ballinamuck tenantry, it would be a record of great barbarity. The relations between him and these people seem to have become, in that evil time, those of deadly and implacable war. A document under his own hand, issued a year before the razing of Ballinamuck (referred to below), and relied upon as a "justification" of that ruthless and shocking proceeding, gives some idea of Lord Lorton's temper:—

"When murders and other barbarous acts of violence are committed upon any part of the property, and convictions do not take place at the ensuing assizes, the occupiers of the lands on the leases expiring will be ejected."

That is to say, wholesale eviction—which meant ruin and death for the wretched people—was to

follow, unless "at the *ensuing* assizes" the Crown prosecuted and convicted for murder or other outrage. The edicts of William Rufus were more considerate than this. Lord Lorton was as good as his threat. Publicly and sincerely he afterwards expressed his sorrow for the vengeance he wreaked in a moment of passion; but it was too late: he had done that which no repentance could undo. He ordered the whole population of Ballinamuck to be swept away, and the entire village to be razed to the ground. It was done. That scene will never be forgotten in Longford.

A Protestant landlord and magistrate in Sligo county—one who was himself, many years ago, "posted" for assassination by the Ribbon authorities—assured me that the frightful severity of the law, as administered at the time—the excessive penalties, and the vengeful spirit in which they were inflicted—had much to do in driving the rural population into this lawless and savage state. "I have known," said he, "a man to be executed for breaking the hasp of a door and rescuing a mule belonging to himself that had been seized and impounded." This was what was called salutary vigour. He added that in more instances

than one within his own knowledge the crimes of the Ribbonmen, abominable as they were, had been preceded by heartless provocations. The way, as my friend described it to me, in which the body of a man murdered in that neighbourhood was discovered was truly remarkable. This man, Madden by name—a sullen, daring, reckless fellow—united nearly every avocation that could render him odious to the people. He had been a tithe-proctor, brutal and unfeeling in his razzias. He was rent-warner and bailiff. He knew the surrounding population hated him, and he defiantly displayed his hate of them. It was decided at some midnight council that Madden should be put to death. Parties of two or three lay in wait for him on several occasions, but he happened not to pass by the way which they expected. At length no less than thirty-six men, divided into four separate parties of nine each, were told off and posted at every possible path by which he could reach his house, returning from the market-town. One of these bands encountered the wretched man, and murdered him, not many perches from his own door. While the body was yet warm—nay, horrible to relate, while life yet throbbed in it—they buried it in a corner of a freshly ploughed field

close at hand, leaving not a trace of their bloody deed visible to tell the tale. Madden was missed. The hue and cry was raised. The police scoured the whole country-side, searched every house, examined every bush and fence, all in vain. No clue could be found. It seemed as if the deed was to be for ever shrouded in impenetrable mystery. One day the daughter of the murdered man was passing from one field to another, and mounted an old dry-built stone wall. It gave way beneath her, and she fell heavily forward. To save herself, as she came with a shock to the ground, she put out her hand. As it sunk in the soft soil it touched and grasped—the hand of her father's buried corpse! The unfortunate man seems to have struggled in his bloody grave after the murderers had quitted the scene. He had thrust one of his hands upward to within a few inches of the surface!

From 1835 to 1855 the Ribbon organisation was at its greatest strength. For the last fifteen or twenty years it has been gradually disappearing from the greater part of Ireland, yet, strange to say, betimes intensifying, in a baser and more malignant form than ever, in one or two localities. With the emigration of the labouring classes it

was carried abroad, to England and to America. At one time the most formidable lodges were in Lancashire, whither, it is said, the headquarters were removed for safety. It manifestly adapted itself to the necessities or requirements of the class whence its ranks were recruited; for while at home in Ireland it affected to right the wrongs of tenants and farm-labourers against landlords and bailiffs, in England it offered to its members the advantages of a league offensive and defensive in a species of trades-union terrorism. Likely enough some sort of combination was found to be almost a necessity by the labouring Irish at one stage of their existence in England, when the effect of their appearance in the labour market drew upon them the fierce hostility of the lower classes around them. But all this has passed away; and the few traces of demoralised Ribbonism that may yet be found lingering are, in nearly every case, miserable leagues for the lowest and worst of purposes, in which Irishman slays Irishman, and leave to live or to obtain employment in a particular district is regulated by the secret tribunal. Ribbonism has been killed off—has found existence impossible—according as a healthier public opinion has grown amongst the masses. Here,

again, the school and the newspaper have proved powerful agencies of moral and political regeneration. This curse of Ireland is doomed to disappear before the onward march of intelligence and patriotism.

CHAPTER V.

FATHER MATHEW.

"Two suns," we are told, "do not shine in the one firmament"; yet the same period of Irish history beheld side by side with Daniel O'Connell, at the zenith of his fame, his great countryman and contemporary, Theobald Mathew, "the Apostle of Temperance."

In widely different characters, however, these two men won eminence and praise. One was a political leader; the other was a moral reformer. The one commanded the allegiance of a party in the State; the other received the homage of all. There is scarcely a country in the civilised world in which the memory of Father Mathew is not revered. Wherever good men are labouring for the elevation of humanity, the story of his career is an incentive to brave endeavour; and how far his work has perished with or survived him is a question which excites solicitude.

Theobald Mathew was born on the 10th of October 1790, at Thomastown House, near Cashel, in Tipperary, at that time the seat of George Mathew, Earl of Llandaff. The Mathews, or Mathew, family, of Welsh origin, appear to have been settled in Tipperary ever since the civil war of 1641. In 1650 one of its members, Captain George Mathews, then recently married to Lady Cahir, held Cahir Castle for the king, but after a brave resistance capitulated to the forces of Cromwell; the Protector, in a letter under his own hand, bearing testimony to the gallantry of the defence.

At an early age young Theobald was sent to Maynooth to be educated for the Catholic priesthood; but an infraction of discipline—the entertainment of some fellow-students in his rooms at forbidden hours, I believe—led to his retirement from the college. He completed his ecclesiastical training, however, at the Capuchin College, Kilkenny, and was ordained in 1814. After a few years of clerical labour in the city of St. Canice, he was moved by his superiors to the Cork friary of the order, where he devoted himself with more than ordinary zeal to duties of his position.

In the burst of success which hailed Father

Mathew's crusade against intoxicating drink, people came to regard him as the originator or parent of the temperance movement; yet this was not so. He was a recruit, brought slowly to espouse the cause which but for his adhesion might have perished in Ireland. As early at all events as 1836, there was in Cork a little band of men who had embraced the doctrine of total abstinence from alcoholic beverages. They were chiefly Protestants; some of the most active among them belonging to a religious denomination the members of which have been leaders in nearly every social and moral reform, and every humane or philanthropic effort, within my memory in Ireland—the Society of Friends.

When it was whispered around that men not yet in a lunatic asylum had taken up the notion that human life was possible without alcoholic drink, the wits of Cork laughed heartily at the craze. The believers in it were popularly regarded very much as the Shaker community seem to be in this year of grace eighteen hundred and seventy-seven. They were verily the "peculiar people" of that date. After a while, undeterred by the derision which they knew awaited them, they ventured upon public addresses, usually in some

little school-room or meeting-house hid away in the back lanes. Hither came stray listeners to hear what it was all like, and to see with their own eyes the fanatics and fools who thought men could do without Beamish and Crawford's porter, or Wyse's whisky. Many "came to scoff," but few indeed "remained to pray." There is, perhaps, not a city in the empire so dominated by sarcasms as Cork. Every well-known character has a *soubriquet* fastened on him by some one of the local wits. Every incident is viewed from its comic side. In the Momonian capital, to be laughed at is to be suppressed, and this cold water business was overwhelmed by ridicule. . .

Toiling laboriously amidst the squalor and poverty of the poorest quarter of Cork city, the young Capuchin was at this time laying the foundation for that marvellous personal influence which afterwards formed so great a part of his power. He was not content with discharging the ordinary duties of his sacred calling, although these were in themselves severe and trying. He pushed entirely outside the strictly spiritual sphere. He set up schools—infant and adult, Sunday and week-day; rented a loft here and a third-floor there, wherein he established industrial teaching; the

girls being taught various knitting and needle-work occupations, the boys such trades as seemed most suitable. Then there was not a dispensary or an hospital, not an alms society or room-keepers' aid fund, in Cork, that he was not in the thick of the work, pushing on every good endeavour, and constantly devising some new experiment in the same direction. Before long the name of the young friar was a household word; his untiring activity, his noble unselfishness, his ardent anxiety for upraising the moral and social condition of the wretched masses, were the theme of every tongue. These labours inevitably brought him into association with good and philanthropic men of every creed and every grade; and the charm of his manner, his bright, genial, kindly nature, his unaffected simplicity and single-mindedness, soon rendered him as great a favourite with Protestants as with his own co-religionists.

Amongst the former were some of the total abstinence advocates, notably the leading "fanatic" of the movement, a man whose name is still warmly remembered by his fellow-merchants and fellow-citizens of Cork—William Martin. Long had this sturdy "Quaker" and his gallant band preached the new evangel of abstinence from alcohol; but

they felt that, though the Catholic masses around them respected them greatly and viewed them kindly, no one but a Catholic of influence and popularity could really give the movement headway amongst the people. One day while honest "Bill Martin" and Father Mathew were making their morning visitation of an hospital, the constantly suggested theme of the miseries which drink brought on the people came uppermost. Mr. Martin, in a burst of passionate grief or invective, suddenly stopped and turned to his companion, exclaiming, "Oh, Theobald Mathew, Theobald Mathew, what *thou* couldst do if thou wouldst only take up this work of banishing the fiend that desolates the houses of thy people so!"

The young Capuchin seemed as if struck by some mysterious power. He remained silent, walked moodily on till he parted from his Quaker companion, then went home, pondering words which all that day and all through the night seemed still to ring in his ears, "Oh, Theobald Mathew, what *thou* couldst do if thou wouldst but take up this work!"

If there was one man in Cork city who pre-eminently had tried every other way of rescuing and uplifting the people, it was he. What had

he not done, what had he not tried, and yet did not this drink curse start up at every turn to baffle and defeat his every endeavour?

But was not William Martin's scheme a mad and impracticable idea? Was it not already consigned to failure by the good-humoured laughter of the city? Could *he* indeed do what his friend believed?

For some days Father Mathew considered the whole subject seriously. One morning, as he rose from his knees in his little oratory, he exclaimed aloud, "Here goes, in the name of God."*

An hour afterwards he was in the office of William Martin. "Friend William," said he, "I have come to tell you a piece of news. I mean to join your temperance society to-night."

The honest-souled Quaker rushed over, flung his arms round the neck of that young Popish friar, kissed him like a child, and cried out, "Thank God! thank God!"

Thus entered Father Mathew on that work with which his name is so memorably associated; thus

* This incident is rather differently narrated by the late Mr. Maguire, M.P., in his charming volume "Father Mathew: a Biography." I have preferred to give it as told to myself in early boyhood.

began that wonderful moral revolution which was soon to startle the kingdom.

The news that the popular young Capuchin had taken up with "the tectotal men" soon spread in Cork. All at once it set people thinking, for Father Mathew had always been especially practical, not visionary, in his schemes and efforts for social improvement and moral reform. Crowds came to hear what he might have to say on the subject. Before many weeks the enrolment of adherents attained considerable volume, and the direction of the work passed gradually into his own hands. Indeed he early decided, after consultation with the first friends of the movement, to establish an organisation, or rather an enrolment, under his own presidency, which he did on the 10th of April 1838.

The fame of his labours and of his success filled the city. Every street, every lane and alley, every large workshop, had its story of the marvellous change from misery and want to comfort and happiness wrought in some particular case by "joining Father Mathew." Every locality had its illustration; every one knew some wretched drunkard's home that had been converted, as if by the wand of a magician, into a scene of humble

contentment and smiling plenty. The working classes seemed quite staggered by the indubitable proofs that not only could men live and move and have their being without John Barleycorn's aid, but that health, happiness, and prosperity seemed to be within the easy reach of all who shunned him. The crowds who had found these blessings under the temperance banner were imbued with a grateful enthusiasm. They shouted far and wide the story of their redemption. They hurried to every sufferer with the tidings of hope and joy. Each convert became a fiery apostle in his own way, and before the second anniversary of Father Mathew's lifting of the standard had come round, he found himself at the head of a movement evidently destined to a great future.

There can be no question that the temperance reformation of Father Mathew's time in Ireland was largely the outcome of an enthusiasm which could not altogether last. Its novelty was a great attraction. That is to say, men saw around them the rich fruits of a widely embraced reform that had been preached and accepted among them for the first time. Not yet had reaction or reverse warned them that there was any but a bright side to the picture. Not yet had the terrible lesson been

learnt that "taking the pledge" did not settle the question for aye. As yet the vow retained its pristine force and solemnity. As yet the dispiriting and demoralising spectacle of thousands relapsing again and again had not overthrown popular confidence in the efficacy of the movement.

The period between 1839 and 1845 beheld, however, its unchecked and unbroken triumph. The wonders that had been accomplished in Cork, of course, were noised throughout the neighbouring counties; invitations were pressed on Father Mathew by the local clergy, soliciting his presence so that the blessing which his work was diffusing might be shared by their people.

It may be asked, Why should not these clergymen have themselves administered the total abstinence pledge, as they might have done? Why were Father Mathew's actual presence and personal advocacy so essential? If pious and eloquent exhortation could prevail on men to join in a movement, the good results of which were so startlingly demonstrated, were there not hundreds of priests and laymen, eloquent and earnest, ready to spread the crusade?

The truth is that much of Father Mathew's suc-

cess was owing to his marvellous personal influence —the almost magical effect of his personal exhortations. Furthermore, the *prestige* of his name, and the *éclat* with which he was welcomed in each locality, gave impression to his missionary appearance and vastly increased his power. He was not what would be called a great orator; it was not what we know as eloquence that enabled him to bend to his will the multitudes that thronged around him. I was little more than twelve years of age when I first heard Father Mathew, and I can still remember the impressions then created. They were, I am confident, similar to the emotions experienced by most of those whose good fortune it was to have listened at any time to the "Apostle of Temperance." I was moved not so much by his words as by some indescribable influence or charm which he seemed to exercise over his audience. His voice was exceedingly sweet and musical, and capable of great inflections. His features were pleasing and handsome, and when he smiled, sunshine diffused itself around. There was an air of dignity and tenderness indescribable about him, and the earnestness with which he spoke, the intense feeling he displayed, was irresistible. When such a man preached

among a people so susceptible as the Celtic Irish a cause so just and holy—preached it out of the fulness of a heart abounding with love for them, with compassion for their sorrows and solicitude for their happiness—who can wonder that the whole nation rose at his words as Christendom answered to the call of Peter the Hermit?

It was indeed a "crusade" Father Mathew preached. Whenever he visited a town or city, the population for a score miles all round turned out *en masse.* At Limerick so vast was the assemblage that a troop of dragoons passing along the quay got "jammed" in the crowd, and were literally pushed into the river by the surging of the multitude. Railways were at the time scarcely known in Ireland, and Father Mathew travelled by the mail coach, out of which circumstance a formidable State grievance arose. If the inhabitants of a town or village happened to hear that the famous Capuchin was a passenger, they waylaid the vehicle—"stopped her Majesty's mail," in fact—and refused to let it proceed till he had administered the pledge to them.

It was a time when political feeling ran high and strong in Ireland. It was the period of O'Connell's Repeal agitation and of all the accom-

panying excitement of that movement. Yet, strange to say, Orange and Green alike waved a greeting to Father Mathew; Whig, Tory, and Repealer sounded his praise; and nowhere in all Ireland could he have received a welcome more cordial and enthusiastic than that which was extended to him, "Popish friar" as he was, by the Protestants of Ulster. He had been warned not to carry out his purpose of visiting that province; the Orangemen, it was declared, could not stand the sight of a Catholic priest received with public festive display in their midst. What really happened was that the dreaded Orangemen came out in grand procession to join in the ovation. When Father Mathew saw their flags hung out at Cootehill on church and kirk, he rightly appreciated the spirit of the display, and called for "three cheers" for them! A Catholic clergyman calling for a cordial salutation of the Orange banner, and a Catholic assemblage heartily responding, was something almost inconceivable. It had never occurred before in Ireland; I am afraid it has never occurred since.

In 1843 he visited England, landing at Liverpool, and proceeding by way of Manchester, Huddersfield, Leeds, and York to London. At each of

these places he remained a day or two, administering the pledge to tens of thousands. In London he was fated to encounter the only attempt ever made to offer him insult and violence. The publicans of the great metropolis were wroth with the audacity of this endeavour to bring the temperance movement to their doors. They determined to put Father Mathew down; but they were too skilful to expose their real motive of opposition by openly raising the cry of "trade interests in danger." For weeks the tap-room loungers and beery roughs of the metropolis were harangued over the counter about the "Popish Irish priest" who was coming to overthrow their liberties. The result was that at more than one place in the city, on Father Mathew's appearance an infuriate rabble assailed the platform, compelling him to desist or else to administer the pledge under protection of the police. At Bermondsey the publicans' mob hooted and pelted him, and some of them were detected in an attempt secretly to cut the ropes of the platform scaffolding. It was at the same place and on the same occasion, I believe, that they marched to interrupt him in a procession singularly, let me rather say disgracefully, equipped. The cohort of tap-room roughs were wreathed from head to foot

in hop-leaves; each one bore a can of beer in one hand and a stave in the other. In this fashion they invaded the temperance meeting, whereupon, as might be expected, a violent conflict ensued, terminated only by the timely arrival of a strong body of police.

Despite all such opposition Father Mathew pursued his labours in London. He had the satisfaction, before leaving, of knowing that he had laid broad and deep the foundations of a great reformation amongst, at all events, his own fellow-countrymen and co-religionists in the great city. During his stay the most flattering attentions were poured upon him by the best and greatest men of England. The Protestant Bishop of Norwich invited him to visit that town and accept the hospitalities of the palace. Lord Stanhope pressed a like welcome to Chevening; and at Lord Lansdowne's the "Irish Popish friar" received the cordial greetings of the Duke of Wellington, Lord Brougham, and many other notabilities. He did not relish this "lionising," but he accepted these demonstrations as a valuable moral aid and encouragement to his work. Mr. Maguire tells a story I had not heard before, which is quite characteristic of Father Mathew's simplicity. He

was being taken in to dinner by some noble host in London, when he recognised in one of the attendant servants a man whom he had formerly known as a humble but devoted member of the temperance society in Cork city. Father Mathew rushed over to him, shook him heartily by the hand, and earnestly inquired after his welfare, above all whether he still was faithful to his "pledge." The honoured guest of the evening claiming acquaintance in this way with one of the domestics must have sadly astonished some of the company. But Father Mathew saw only in poor James or Thomas "a man and a brother" in the ranks of the great cause.

It may be estimated that in 1845 the temperance movement had attained to its topmost height in Ireland. What had it to show for itself? What were its visible fruits by this time? It is no exaggeration to say it had effected an astonishing transformation. It could not bring to Ireland that prosperity and wealth which flow from increased production or multiplied resources. The condition of the bulk of the population was at best, as the world soon afterwards came to know, terribly precarious. But subject to this reservation, it may be said that never had a people made within

the same space of time such strides from hardship to comparative comfort, from improvidence to thrift, from the crimes of inebriate passion to the ordered habits of sobriety and industry. I speak of what I saw. The temperance movement had not, I repeat, removed the deep-lying political causes of Irish poverty and crime; but it brought to the humblest some amelioration of his lot; it banished from thousands of homes afflictions that politics (as we use the phrase) could neither create nor cure; it visibly diffused the feeling of self-respect and the virtue of self-reliance among the people. We all could note its influence, not only in their personal habits, but in their dress, in their manners, and in the greater neatness and tidiness of their homes. To this purport came testimony from every side. The magistracy and police told of crime greatly diminished. The clergy told of churches better filled with sincere and earnest worshippers. Traders rejoiced to find how vast was the increase in popular expenditure on articles of food and clothing or of home or personal comfort. There is official evidence in abundance on the point. As early as 1840 the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, in a public letter, said: "To the benefit which the temperance pledge

has conferred upon Ireland, in the improved habits of the people, and in the diminution of outrage, his Excellency bears grateful testimony." Like declarations might be cited from executive officials throughout the later years up to 1845. The police returns for the period are equally striking; but so many circumstances have to be weighed and calculated when considering the fluctuations in "criminal statistics" in Ireland, that as a general rule I lay little stress on what they show. Still, it is rather convincing to find that the annual committals to prison in the seven years from 1839 to 1845, with a rapidly increasing population, show a steady decrease from twelve thousand to seven thousand; that the capital sentences in each year declined gradually from sixty-six to fourteen; and that the penal convictions sank from nine hundred in 1839 to five hundred in 1845.

Of one interest in the country no doubt the movement made a wreck; the whisky trade was for the time almost annihilated. In this connection two remarkable facts deserve to be especially noted: firstly, that members of Father Mathew's own family were large distillers, and were amongst the first to suffer ruin by the success

of his labours; secondly, that from first to last no complaint, invective, or opposition ever was directed against Father Mathew by those of his countrymen whose fortunes he thus overwhelmed. Nay, amongst the warmest eulogies that cheered his career may be found the utterances of Irish manufacturers and vendors of alcoholic drink.*

But times of gloom and sorrow were now at hand for Father Mathew and for Ireland. Already a canker care was gnawing at that once light and joyous heart. Troubles and embarrassments, beneath which, alas! he was eventually to sink, were secretly crushing the mind and energies of Father Mathew. Alone—single-handed—he had for seven years conducted a movement, had established, extended, and maintained an organisation such as no managing executive in these days could work without enormous pecuniary resources; and regular revenues for the purpose he had none whatever. He seemed to take little thought of financial ways and means, but pushed on eagerly

* It is right to say that a like generous and unselfish spirit still exists among the same classes in many parts of Ireland. No men more heartily praise the good effects of the voluntary "Sunday closing" adopted throughout Wexford than the licensed traders themselves, as a general rule, do in that county.

with the work; freely incurring all incidental obligations, and raising funds on his own responsibility as best he could.

To each one of the hundreds of thousands to whom he administered the pledge an enrolment card and medal were given; in truth the people seemed to think it no binding vow without this visible token. Each member was supposed to pay a shilling for these symbols of enrolment; but as a matter of fact not more than half the number so paid. On the contrary, too often so wretched was the plight of the hapless victim of intemperance who knelt before him, that Father Mathew's generous hand was outreached not only with a blessing but a dole. In 1845 he was in debt to medal manufacturers and others on behalf of the temperance movement some £5000. He had long groaned under the burden unknown to the world, unwilling, I believe, to disclose the source on which he relied for sometime liquidating these claims. Lady Elizabeth Mathew, his earliest and most constant friend, had intimated to him her intention of bequeathing him a substantial token of her admiration for his work and esteem for himself. Like many another generous purpose of a similar character, this was doomed to be

unfulfilled. Death called too suddenly on the intending benefactress, and Father Mathew found himself haunted by the tortures that dog the debtor's path.

That the country would have freely come to his relief in this matter, as an obvious act of duty and of gratitude, surely cannot be doubted; but coincidently with the revelation of his embarrassments came events that paralysed the public mind. The famine, that stupendous calamity which no one can recall without a shudder, had burst on the hapless land. In the fierce struggle for existence, the desperate effort to save the people, every other public duty was suspended; and Father Mathew's labours from 1846 to 1850 were one prolonged combat with the terrible scourge that desolated the country. Bravely, uncomplainingly, unfalteringly he worked on, amidst the wreck of every hope, the overthrow of all he loved and prized. In May 1847 he was nominated by the clergy of Cork for the then vacant mitre of that diocese; but the choice was not confirmed at Rome, and a new disappointment tried his sinking soul. In the same year the Government, aware of his embarrassed circumstances, bestowed on him a grant of £300 a year, which he forthwith devoted

to paying for an insurance on his life to indemnify his creditors. Mental and physical wear and tear such as he endured proved too much for even his once splendid constitution. In the spring of 1848 he was attacked by paralysis; an ominous premonition. Although he recovered in a few weeks, and in the following year visited America, where he remained till the close of 1851, he was never again the same man. In February 1852 paralysis assailed him for the second time, and from that date forward all friends could see that active life for him was over. In October 1854 he went to Madeira, and tried for a year what balm its breezes might bring. Next year he came home, and found, I verily believe, more solace and relief under the tender care and affectionate attentions of Protestant friends in Liverpool, Mr. and Mrs. Rathbone, than amidst the vineyards and orange groves of the sunny southern isle. In 1856 he came, or rather was brought, to Queenstown. He himself by this time felt that the end was not afar off, and he fain would die amidst the familiar faces and scenes of home. On the 8th of December 1856 a wail of sorrow in the crowded streets of Cork city told that one fondly loved, yea, idolised, by the people, was no more.

Not Ireland alone, but all Christendom, mourned a true hero in "the Apostle of Temperance."

I have said that the astonishing success of the temperance movement from 1838 to 1845 was largely the product of enthusiasm, and was certain to be followed by a reaction. Even if no unusual misfortune had befallen, some such retrocession would, I am confident, have been suffered, but nothing that would have seriously impaired the reformation which Father Mathew had wrought. Few words are needed to explain how such an event as the famine wrecked this great work, as it did many another noble enterprise, moral and material, at the time. It was as if a great wave submerged the island, burying, obliterating, or sweeping away everything. When that fearful deluge subsided, and the mountain-tops began to reappear, a scene of utter desolation came to view.

The circumstances under which the drink-curse arose anew amongst the Irish people are painfully reproachful to our law-makers and administrators. There were scores, probably hundreds, of districts in Ireland from which drink-shops had long totally disappeared; and had there been at the time any statutable conservation of this "free-soil" area, three-fourths of Father Mathew's work would have

endured to the present hour. But what happened within my own experience and observation was this: When the Government relief works were set on foot all over the kingdom, close by every pay-office or depôt there started into operation a meal-store and a whisky-shop; nay, often the pay-clerks and road staff lodged in the latter, and made it "headquarters." Only too well the wretched people knew what the firewater would do for them; it would bring them oblivion or excitement, in which the horror and despair around them would be forgotten for a while. In many a tale of shipwreck we read with wonder that at the last dread moment the crew broached the spirit casks and drank till delirium came. In Ireland the starving people seemed possessed by some similar infatuation when once more the fatal lure was set up before them. In the track of the Government relief staff, and specially "licensed" by law, the drink-shops reappeared, and, to a large extent, reconquered what they had lost. Not wholly, however. There are thousands of men in Ireland to-day who "took the pledge from Father Mathew" and hold by it still. There are cities and towns in which the flag has never been hauled down, and where its adherents are

now as numerous as ever. To the movement of Father Mathew is owing, moreover, that public opinion in favour of temperance effort, that parliamentary vote in favour of temperance legislation, which Ireland has so notably and so steadily exhibited. The pure-souled and great-hearted Capuchin has not lived and laboured in vain.

CHAPTER VI.

"THE BLACK FORTY-SEVEN."

THERE is probably no subject on which such painful misunderstanding and bitter recrimination have prevailed between the peoples of England and Ireland as the Irish famine. The enmities and antagonisms arising out of other historical events were at all events comprehensible. The havoc and devastation which ensued upon the Royalist-Cromwellian war of 1641–1650, the confiscations and proscriptions which followed the Stuart struggle in 1690, the insurrection of 1798, and the overthrow of the Irish constitution in 1800, were causes of ire, on the one side or the other, as to the reality of which there was at least no controversy. But it was not so in this case. The English people, remembering only the sympathy and compassion which they felt, the splendid contributions which they freely bestowed in that

sad time, are shocked and angered beyond endurance when they hear Irishmen refer to the famine as a "slaughter." In Ireland, on the other hand, the burning memory of horrors which more prompt and competent action on the part of the ruling authorities might have considerably averted, seems to overwhelm all other recollection, and the noble generosity of the English people appears to be forgotten in a frenzy of reproach against the English Government of that day.

I know not whether the time has even yet arrived when that theme can be fairly treated, and when a calm and just apportionment of blame and merit may be attempted. To-day, full thirty years after the event, I tremble to contemplate it.

In 1841 the population of Ireland was 8,175,124 souls. By 1845 it had probably reached to nearly nine millions. The increase had been fairly continuous for at least a century, and had become rapid between 1820 and 1840. To any one looking beneath the surface the condition of the country was painfully precarious. Nine millions of a population living at best in a light-hearted and hopeful hand-to-mouth contentment, totally dependent on the hazards of one crop, destitute of

manufacturing industries, and utterly without reserve or resource to fall back upon in time of reverse; what did all this mean but a state of things critical and alarming in the extreme? Yet no one seemed conscious of danger. The potato crop had been abundant for four or five years, and respite from dearth and distress was comparative happiness and prosperity. Moreover, the temperance movement had come to make the "good times" still better. Everything looked bright. No one concerned himself to discover how slender and treacherous was the foundation for this general hopefulness and confidence.

Yet signs of the coming storm had been given. Partial famine caused by failing harvests had indeed been intermittent in Ireland, and quite recently warnings that ought not to have been mistaken or neglected had given notice that the esculent which formed the sole dependence of the peasant millions was subject to some mysterious blight. In 1844 it was stricken in America, but in Ireland the yield was healthy and plentiful as ever. The harvest of 1845 promised to be the richest gathered for many years. Suddenly, in one short month, in one week it might be said, the withering breath of a simoom seemed to sweep

the land, blasting all in its path. I myself saw whole tracts of potato growth changed *in one night* from smiling luxuriance to a shrivelled and blackened waste. A shout of alarm arose. But the buoyant nature of the Celtic peasant did not yet give way. The crop was so profuse that it was expected the healthy portion would reach an average result. Winter revealed the alarming fact that the tubers had rotted in pit and store-house. Nevertheless the farmers, like hapless men who double their stakes to recover losses, made only the more strenuous exertions to till a larger breadth in 1846. Although already feeling the pinch of sore distress, if not actual famine, they worked as if for dear life; they begged and borrowed on any terms the means whereby to crop the land once more. The pawn-offices were choked with the humble finery that had shone at the village dance or christening feast; the banks and local money-lenders were besieged with appeals for credit. Meals were stinted, backs were bared. Anything, anything to tide over the interval to the harvest of "Forty-six."

O God, it is a dreadful thought that all this effort was but more surely leading them to ruin! It was this harvest of Forty-six that sealed their

doom. Not partially but completely, utterly, hopelessly it perished. As in the previous year, all promised brightly up to the close of July. Then, suddenly, in a night, whole areas were blighted; and this time, alas! no portion of the crop escaped. A cry of agony and despair went up all over the land. The last desperate stake for life had been played, and all was lost.

The doomed people realised but too well what was before them. Last year's premonitory sufferings had exhausted them; and now?—they must die!

My native district figures largely in the gloomy record of that dreadful time. I saw the horrible phantasmagoria—would God it were but that!—pass before my eyes. Blank stolid dismay, a sort of stupor, fell upon the people, contrasting remarkably with the fierce energy put forth a year before. It was no uncommon sight to see the cottier and his little family seated on the garden fence gazing all day long in moody silence at the blighted plot that had been their last hope. Nothing could arouse them. You spoke; they answered not. You tried to cheer them; they shook their heads. I never saw so sudden and so terrible a transformation.

When first in the autumn of 1845 the partial blight appeared, wise voices were raised in warning to the Government that a frightful catastrophe was at hand; yet even then began that fatal circumlocution and inaptness which it maddens one to think of. It would be utter injustice to deny that the Government made exertions which judged by ordinary emergencies would be prompt and considerable. But judged by the awful magnitude of the evil then at hand or actually befallen, they were fatally tardy and inadequate. When at length the executive did hurry, the blunders of precipitancy outdid the disasters of excessive deliberation.

In truth the Irish famine was one of those stupendous calamities which the rules and formulæ of ordinary constitutional administration were unable to cope with, and which could be efficiently encountered only by the concentration of plenary powers and resources in some competent "despotism" located in the scene of disaster. It was easy to foresee the result of an attempt to deal "at long range" with such an evil—to manage it from Downing Street, London, according to orthodox routine. Again and again the Government were warned, not by heedless orators or popular leaders,

but by men of the highest position and soundest repute in Ireland, that even with the very best intentions on their part, mistake and failure must abound in any attempt to grapple with the famine by the ordinary machinery of Government. Many efforts, bold and able efforts, were made by the Government and by Parliament eighteen months subsequently—I refer especially to the measures taken in the session of 1847. But, unfortunately, everything seemed to come too late. Delay made all the difference. In October 1845 the Irish Mansion House Relief Committee implored the Government to call Parliament together and throw open the ports. The prayer was refused. Again and again the terrible urgency of the case, the magnitude of the disaster at hand, was pressed on the executive. It was the obstinate refusal of the Government to listen to such remonstrances and entreaties, and the sad verification subsequently of such apprehensions, that implanted in the Irish mind the bitter memories which still occasionally find vent in passionate accusation of "England."

Not but the Government had many and weighty arguments in behalf of the course they took. Firstly, they feared exaggeration, and waited for

official investigation and report.* Even when official testimony was forthcoming, the Cabinet in London erred, as the Irish peasantry did, in trusting somewhat that the harvest of 1846 would change gloom to joy. When the worst came in 1846-47, much precious time was lost through misunderstanding and recrimination between the Irish landlords and the executive; charges of neglect of duties on one hand, and of incapacity on the other, passing freely to and fro. No doubt the Government feared waste, prodigality, and abuse if it placed absolute power and unlimited supplies in the hands of an

* The truth is, the fight over the Corn Law question in England at the time was peculiarly unfortunate for Ireland; because the protectionist press and politicians felt it a duty strenuously to deny there was any danger of famine, lest such a circumstance should be made a pretext for Free Trade. Thus the Duke of Richmond, on the 9th of December 1845, speaking at the Agricultural Protection Society, said: "With respect to the cry of 'Famine,' he believed that it was perfectly illusory, and no man of respectability could have put it in good faith if he had been acquainted with the facts within the knowledge of their society."

At Warwick, on the 31st of December, Mr. Newdegate carried a resolution testifying against "the fallacy and mischief of the reports of a deficient harvest," and affirming that "there was no reasonable ground for apprehending a scarcity of food."

Like declarations abounded in England up to a late period of the famine, and, no doubt, considerably retarded the prompt action of the Government.

Irish board; and one must allow that, to a commercial-minded people, the violations of the doctrines of political economy involved in every suggestion and demand shouted across the Channel from Ireland were very alarming. Yet in the end it was found—all too late, unfortunately—that those doctrines were inapplicable in such a case. They had to be flung aside in 1847. Had they been discarded a year or two sooner a million of lives might have been saved.

The situation bristled with difficulties. "Do not demoralise the people by pauper doles, but give them employment," said one counsellor. "Beware how you interfere with the labour market," answered another. "It is no use voting millions to be paid away on relief works while you allow the price of food to be run up four hundred per cent.; set up Government depôts for sale of food at reasonable price," cried many wise and far-seeing men. "Utterly opposed to the teachings of Adam Smith," responded Lord John Russell.

At first the establishment of public soup-kitchens under local relief committees, subsidised by Government, was relied upon to arrest the famine. I doubt if the world ever saw so huge a

demoralisation, so great a degradation, visited upon a once high-spirited and sensitive people. All over the country large iron boilers were set up in which what was called "soup" was concocted; later on Indian-meal stirabout was boiled. Around these boilers on the roadside there daily moaned and shrieked and fought and scuffled crowds of gaunt, cadaverous creatures that once had been men and women made in the image of God. The feeding of dogs in a kennel was far more decent and orderly. I once thought—ay, and often bitterly said, in public and in private—that never, never would our people recover the shameful humiliation of that brutal public soup-boiler scheme. I frequently stood and watched the scene till tears blinded me and I almost choked with grief and passion. It was heart-breaking, almost maddening, to see; but help for it there was none.

The Irish poor-law system early broke down under the strain which the famine imposed. Until 1846 the workhouses were shunned and detested by the Irish poor. Relief of destitution had always been regarded by the Irish as a sort of religious duty or fraternal succour. Poverty was a misfortune, not a crime. When, however, relief was

offered, on the penal condition of an imprisonment that sundered the family tie, and which, by destroying home, howsoever humble, shut out all hope of future recovery, it was indignantly spurned. Scores of times I have seen some poor widow before the workhouse board clasp her little children tightly to her heart and sob aloud, "No, no, your honour. If they are to be parted from me I'll not come in. I'll beg the wide world with them."

But soon beneath the devouring pangs of starvation even this holy affection had to give way, and the famishing people poured into the workhouses, which quickly choked with the dying and the dead. Such privations had been endured in every case before this hated ordeal was faced, that the people entered the Bastille merely to die. The parting scenes of husband and wife, father and mother and children, at the board-room door would melt a heart of stone. Too well they felt it was to be an eternal severance, and that this loving embrace was to be their last on earth. The warders tore them asunder —the husband from the wife, the mother from the child—for "discipline" required that it should be so. But, with the famine fever in every ward, and the air around them laden with disease and death,

they knew their fate, and parted like victims at the foot of the guillotine.

It was not long until the workhouses overflowed and could admit no more. Rapidly as the death-rate made vacancies, the pressure of applicants overpowered all resources. Worse still, bankruptcy came on many a union. In some the poor-rate rose to twenty-two shillings on the pound, and very nearly the entire rural population of several were needing relief. In a few cases, I am sorry to say, the horrible idea seemed to seize the landowners on the boards that all rates would be ineffectual, and that, as their imposition would result only in ruining "property," it was as well to "let things take their course." Happily an act of Parliament was passed in 1846 which gave the poor-law commissioners in Dublin power to deal with cases of delay or refusal to make adequate provision for maintenance of the workhouse. All such boards were abolished by sealed order, and paid vice-guardians were appointed in their place. To these, as well as to elected boards willing to face their duty, the commissioners were empowered to advance, by way of loan, secured on the lands within the union, funds sufficient to carry on the poor-law system. Had it not been for this arrange-

ment, the workhouses would have closed altogether in many parts of the country.

The conduct of the Irish landlords throughout the famine period has been variously described, and has been, I believe, generally condemned. I consider the censure visited on them too sweeping. I hold it to be in some respects cruelly unjust. On many of them no blame too heavy could possibly fall. A large number were permanent absentees; their ranks were swelled by several who early fled the post of duty at home—cowardly and selfish deserters of a brave and faithful people. Of those who remained, some may have grown callous; it is impossible to contest authentic instances of brutal heartlessness here and there. But granting all that has to be entered on the dark debtor side, the overwhelming balance is the other way. The bulk of the resident Irish landlords manfully did their best in that dread hour.* If they did too

* No adequate tribute has ever been paid to the memory of those Irish landlords—and they were men of every party and creed—who perished martyrs to duty in that awful time; who did not fly the plague-reeking workhouse or fever-tainted court. Their names would make a goodly roll of honour. The people of Bantry still mourn for Mr. Richard White of Inchiclogh, cousin of Lord Bantry, who early fell in this way. Mr. Martin, M.P.—"Dick Martin," Prince of Connemara—caught

little compared with what the landlord class in England would have done in similar case, it was because little was in their power. The famine found most of the resident landed gentry of Ireland on the brink of ruin. They were heritors of estates heavily overweighted with the debts of a bygone generation. Broad lands and lordly mansions were held by them on settlements and conditions that allowed small scope for the exercise of individual liberality. To these landowners the failure of one year's rental receipts meant mortgage foreclosure and hopeless ruin. Yet cases might be named by the score in which such men scorned to avert by pressure on their suffering tenantry the fate they saw impending over them. They "went down with the ship."

In the autumn of 1846 relief works were set on foot, the Government having received parliamentary authority to grant baronial loans for such undertakings. There might have been found many

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fever while acting as a magistrate, and was swept away. One of the most touching stories I ever heard was that told me by an eye-witness of how Mr. Nolan of Ballinderry (father of Captain J. P. Nolan, M.P.), braving the deadly typhus in Tuam workhouse, was struck down, amidst the grief of a people who mourn him to this day.

ways of applying these funds in reproductive employment, but the modes decided on were draining and road-making. Of course it was not possible to provide very rapidly the engineering staff requisite for surveying and laying out so many thousands of new roads all over the country; but eventually the scheme was somehow hurried into operation. The result was in every sense deplorable failure. The wretched people were by this time too wasted and emaciated to work. The endeavour to do so under an inclement winter sky only hastened death. They tottered at daybreak to the roll-call; vainly tried to wheel the barrow or ply the pick, but fainted away on the "cutting," or lay down on the wayside to rise no more. As for the "roads" on which so much money was wasted, and on which so many lives were sacrificed, hardly any of them were finished. Miles of grass-grown earthworks throughout the country now mark their course and commemorate for posterity one of the gigantic blunders of the famine time.

The first remarkable sign of the havoc which death was making was the decline and disappearance of funerals. Amongst the Irish people a funeral was always a great display, and participation in the procession was for all neighbours and

friends a sacred duty. A "poor" funeral—that is, one thinly attended—was considered disrespectful to the deceased and reproachful to the living. The humblest peasant was borne to the grave by a parochial *cortége*. But one could observe in the summer of '46 that, as funerals became more frequent, there was a rapid decline in the number of attendants, until at length persons were stopped on the road and requested to assist in conveying the coffin a little way further. Soon, alas! neither coffin nor shroud could be supplied. Daily in the street and on the footway some poor creature lay down as if to sleep, and presently was stiff and stark. In our district it was a common occurrence to find on opening the front door in early morning, leaning against it, the corpse of some victim who in the night time had "rested" in its shelter. We raised a public subscription, and employed two men with horse and cart to go around each day and gather up the dead. One by one they were taken to a great pit at Ardnabrahair Abbey, and dropped through the hinged bottom of a "trap-coffin" into a common grave below. In the remoter rural districts even this rude sepulture was impossible. In the field and by the ditch side the victims lay as they fell, till some charit-

able hand was found to cover them with the adjacent soil.

It was the fever which supervened on the famine that wrought the greatest slaughter and spread the greatest terror. For this destroyer when it came spared no class, rich or poor. As long as it was "the hunger" alone that raged, it was no deadly peril to visit the sufferers; but not so now. To come within the reach of this contagion was certain death. Whole families perished unvisited and unassisted. By levelling above their corpses the sheeling in which they died, the neighbours gave them a grave.*

No pen can trace nor tongue relate the countless deeds of heroism and self-sacrifice which this dreadful visitation called forth on the part, pre-eminently, of two classes in the community—the Catholic clergy and the dispensary doctors of Ireland. I have named the Catholic clergy, not that those of the Protestant denominations did not furnish many instances of devotion fully as striking,†

* I myself assisted in such a task under heartrending circumstances in June 1847.

† The Protestant curate of my native parish in 1847 was the Rev. Alexander Ben Hallowell, subsequently rector of Clonakilty, and now I believe residing somewhere in Lancashire. There were comparatively few of his own flock in a way to

but because on the former obviously fell the brunt of the trial. For them there was no flinching. A call to administer the last rites of religion to the inmate of a plague-ward or fever-shed *must* be, and is, obeyed by the Catholic priest, though death to himself be the well-known consequence. The fatality amongst the two classes I have mentioned, clergymen and doctors, was lamentable. Christian heroes, martyrs for humanity, their names are blazoned on no courtly roll; yet shall they shine upon an eternal page, brighter than the stars!

But even this dark cloud of the Irish famine had its silver lining. If it is painful to recall the

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suffer from the famine; but he dared death daily in his desperate efforts to save the perishing creatures around him. A poor hunchback named Richard O'Brien lay dying of the plague in a deserted hovel at a place called "the Custom Gap." Mr. Hallowell, passing by, heard the moans and went in. A shocking sight met his view. On some rotten straw in a dark corner lay poor "Dick" naked, except for a few rags across his body. Mr. Hallowell rushed to the door and saw a young friend on the road: "Run, run with this shilling and buy me some wine," he cried. Then he re-entered the hovel, stripped off his own clothes, and with his own hands put upon the plague-stricken hunchback the flannel vest and drawers and the shirt of which he had just divested himself. I know this to be true. *I* was the "young friend" who went for and brought the wine.

disastrous errors of irresolution and panic, one can linger gratefully over memories of Samaritan philanthropy, of efficacious generosity, of tenderest sympathy. The people of England behaved nobly; and assuredly not less munificent were the citizens of the great American Republic, which had already become the home of thousands of the Irish race. From every considerable town in England there poured subscriptions, amounting in the aggregate to hundreds of thousands of pounds. From America came a truly touching demonstration of national sympathy. Some citizens of the States contributed two shiploads of breadstuffs, and the American Government decided to furnish the ships which should bring the offering to the Irish shore. Accordingly two war-vessels, the *Macedonian* and the *Jamestown* frigates, having had their armaments removed, their "gun-decks" displaced and cargo bulk-heads put up, were filled to the gunwale with best American flour and biscuits, and despatched on their errand of mercy. It happened that just previously the British naval authorities had rather strictly refused the loan of a ship for a like purpose, as being quite opposed to all departmental regulations (which, to be sure, it was), and a good deal of angry feeling was called

forth by the refusal. Yet had it a requiting contrast in the despatch from England, by voluntary associations there, of several deputations or embassies of succour, charged to visit personally the districts in Ireland most severely afflicted, and to distribute with their own hands the benefactions they brought.

Foremost in this blessed work were the Society of Friends, the English members of that body co-operating with its central committee in Dublin. Amongst the most active and fearless of their representatives was a young Yorkshire Quaker, whose name, I doubt not, is still warmly remembered by Connemara peasants. He drove from village to village, he walked bog and moor, rowed the lake and climbed the mountain, fought death, as it were, hand to hand, in brave resolution to save the people. His correspondence from the scene of his labours would constitute in itself a graphic memorial of the Irish famine. That young "Yorkshire Quaker" of 1847 was destined a quarter of a century later to be known to the empire as a minister of the Crown—the Right Hon. W. E. Forster, M.P.

In truth, until the appearance a few years since of the Rev. Mr. O'Rorke's excellent volume, the

'History of the Irish Famine,' the only competent record of the events of that time was the 'Report of the Society of Friends' Irish Relief Committee.' It is a remarkable fact that the traveller who now visits the west and south of Ireland, and seeks to gather from the people reminiscences of the famine time, will find praise and blame a good deal mingled as to nearly every other relief agency of the period; but naught save grateful recollection of the unostentatious, kindly, prompt, generous, and efficacious action of the Friends' committee. Fondly as the Catholic Irish revere the memory of their own priests who suffered with and died for them in that fearful time, they give a place in their prayers to the "good Quakers, God bless them," Jonathan Pim, Richard Allen, Richard Webb, and William Edward Forster.

The Irish famine of 1847 had results, social and political, that constitute it one of the most important events in Irish history for more than two hundred years. It is impossible for any one who knew the country previous to that period, and who has thoughtfully studied it since, to avoid the conclusion that so much has been destroyed, or so greatly changed, that the Ireland of old times will be seen no more.

The losses will, I would fain hope, be in a great degree repaired; the gains entirely retained. Yet much that was precious was engulfed, I fear, beyond recovery. "Here are twenty miles of country, sir," said a dispensary doctor to me, "and before the famine there was not a padlock from end to end of it." Under the pressure of hunger, ravenous creatures prowled around barn and storehouse, stealing corn, potatoes, cabbage, turnips—anything, in a word, that might be eaten. Later on the fields had to be watched, gun in hand, or the seed was rooted up and devoured raw. This state of things struck a fatal blow at some of the most beautiful traits of Irish rural life. It destroyed the simple confidence that bolted no door; it banished for ever a custom which throughout the island was of almost universal obligation—the housing for the night, with cheerful welcome, of any poor wayfarer who claimed hospitality. Fear of "the fever," even where no apprehension of robbery was entertained, closed every door, and the custom, once killed off, has not revived. A thousand kindly usages and neighbourly courtesies were swept away. When *sauve qui peut* had resounded throughout a country for three years of alarm and disaster, human nature

becomes contracted in its sympathies, and "every one for himself" becomes a maxim of life and conduct long after. The open-handed, open-hearted ways of the rural population have been visibly affected by the "Forty-seven" ordeal. Their ancient sports and pastimes everywhere disappeared, and in many parts of Ireland have never returned. The outdoor games, the hurling-match, and the village dance are seen no more.

With the greater seriousness of character which the famine period has imprinted on the Irish people, some notable changes for the better must be recognised. Providence, forethought, economy are studied and valued as they never were before. There is more method, strictness, and punctuality in business transactions. There is a graver sense of responsibility on all hands. For the first time the future seems to be earnestly thought of, and its possible vicissitudes kept in view. More steadiness of purpose, more firmness and determination of character, mark the Irish peasantry of the new era. God has willed that in the midst of such awful sufferings some share of blessings should fall on the sorely shattered nation.

CHAPTER VII.

"YOUNG IRELAND."

FLETCHER of Saltoun is credited with the saying, "Let me make the ballads, and let whoso will make the laws." No doubt it was through ballads popular feeling was moved and developed in those days. If Fletcher lived now he would say, "Let me use the printing-press, and let who pleases be premier."

Whoever attentively studies the changes in Irish political life—in its modes of thought and action—within the past forty years, must assign an important place amongst the factors in those changes to that school of politician-litterateurs known as "Young Ireland." Their name and fate as a party are, unfortunately for them, so generally associated with one disastrous incident of their political career—the insurrectionary attempt of 1848—that an erroneous idea is acquired of their

real status, aims, and policy; an unjust estimate is formed of their labours.

"Young Ireland," so called, was a section or offshoot of O'Connell's Repeal party, the latter being antithetically designated "Old Ireland." "Young" and "Old," however, they were alike Repealers; that is, their great political object, the cardinal doctrine of their creed, was the repossession by Ireland of the native legislature wrenched from her by Pitt in 1800. But many notable circumstances marked the Young Irelanders as a totally new school in Irish politics. They first, within our generation, essayed as a party the task of purifying the political atmosphere, of rendering Irish parliamentary action something better and nobler than a scramble for place, or an abject servitude of faction. They first, as a party, taught the doctrine that the people should be appealed to in their intelligence rather than impelled through their prejudices. They boldly proclaimed that individual responsibility and self-reliance should take the place of utter dependence on leaders, lay or clerical. They first seized upon the printing-press and the school as the great agencies of popular enfranchisement. The motto on their

banner epitomised their creed, and indicated the means and end of their policy: "Educate that you may be free."

Forty years ago the typical Irish representative was still in a large degree the swaggering, horse-racing, duel-fighting, hard-drinking, spendthrift style of patriot portrayed by the pen of Charles Lever. The time had not yet come when personal integrity and purity of private life and character were weighed in estimating a man's title to public confidence and esteem. The "popular member" in those days was returned by a combination of patriotic enthusiasm and religious influence, supplemented by the necessary amount of bribery and intimidation. As to these, "the other side began first" of course; and then the distribution of five-pound notes and whisky *ad libitum* on the one hand, and the breaking of skulls with shillelaghs on the other, completed the popular victory. Moreover, the "patronage" customarily vested in a member of Parliament at the time was extensive in small things. The post office and the revenue, the army and the navy, were, to a great extent, the spoil of party. The minister flung patronage to his lobby adherents; and these shared or dispensed it amongst their hustings' par-

tisans. Political independence, as we understand it, was unknown. The schools had not yet sent forth their youthful battalions; the newspaper was an expensive luxury. The reading-room and mechanics' institute were not yet born. The lecture was unknown. Yet in all respects it may be said that things were "on the turn," when an event in 1842 ushered in a new era.

The Repeal Association of O'Connell was worked in large part by his "Old Guard" of the Catholic Emancipation campaign; men who were, more or less, of the old school. But the movement early attracted to it some of the most gifted and brilliant of the young men who were just then emerging from college and university life into the bustle and activity of an exciting time in public affairs. Affinity of tastes, college companionship, community of feeling, brought these youthful Repealers together as a distinct "set" or section in the association. Their minds were fresh from the study of classic models in civic virtue, in love of country, in public heroism. They became inspired with the great ambition of giving a new character, a purer tone, and a bolder direction to the national movement.

Three of these young men—Charles Gavan Duffy, Thomas Osborne Davis, and John Blake Dillon—were strolling in the Phœnix Park one fine summer evening in 1842. They discussed the prospects of the Repeal cause and the calibre of the men directing it; the newspaper press, such as it was, and O'Connell's relations with that section of it which supported the association. They complained that there was no attempt at the intellectual development or political education of the popular mind, and dwelt upon the fact that in a few years more the public schools would be sending forth some tens of thousands of young people able to read and write. They debated the great question, "What was to be done?" They answered that question by agreeing that the first thing necessary was to start a weekly newspaper as the exponent and policy of a new school of politics. Duffy was already a journalist. Though young in years he filled an honourable place in public confidence as editor of the *Belfast Vindicator*. He was the man to whom they looked to play the leading part in this ambitious scheme. Seated under a tree in the Phœnix Park, the three friends decided to start the *Nation* newspaper,

which issued its first number on the 15th of October 1842.

The journal thus founded was destined to play an important part in the subsequent political history of Ireland. It was not a newspaper so much as a great popular educator—a counsellor and guide. Its office was a sort of bureau of national affairs, political, literary, industrial, and artistic. Its editorial room was the rendezvous of the "youthful enthusiasts," as the old-school politicians called them; orators, poets, writers, artists. In the pages of the *Nation* fervid prose and thrilling verse, literary essay and historical ballad, were all pressed into the service of Irish nationality. The effect was beyond all anticipation. The country seemed to awaken to a new life—"a soul had come into Erin."

Emboldened by the success of this first overt act, they struck out into other fields of labour, and determined to supply Ireland with a cheap popular literature, at once entertaining and educational. 'Duffy's Library of Ireland,' a monthly issue of shilling volumes, was the result. Even if they had done no more, this would be no unworthy monument of their zeal for the moral and intel-

lectual as well as the political education of the people.

They were pre-eminently the party of religious tolerance. The leading idea in what may be called their home policy was to break down the antagonism between Catholics and Protestants in Ireland. In this they were long before their time. The experiment, however, was bravely tried. In many a song and many an essay they preached the union of classes and creeds.

What matter that at different shrines
We pray unto one God?
What matter that at different times
Our fathers won this sod?
In fortune and in name we're bound
By stronger links than steel;
And neither can be safe or sound
But in the other's weal.

* * * * *

And oh! it were a gallant deed
To show before mankind
How every race and every creed
Might be by love combined—
Might be combined, yet not forget
The fountains whence they rose,
As filled by many a rivulet
The stately Shannon flows.

Thus pleaded Davis in the *Nation*. More boldly

still he addressed himself to his fellow-Protestants of Ulster—the Orangemen of the North :—

Rusty the swords our fathers unsheathed,
William and James are turned to clay;
Long did we till the wrath they bequeathed;
Red was the crop and bitter the pay.
Freedom fled us;
Knaves misled us;
Under the feet of the foemen we lay;
But in their spite
The Irish unite,
For orange and green will carry the day.

All in vain. As remote as the millenium seemed the day when Orange and Green would cease to wave over opposing hosts arrayed in deadly hate and fiercest hostility.

Meantime, with a vigour that quite astonished observers, the Young Irelanders addressed themselves to the equally formidable task of reforming certain of the ideas and usages of Irish politics. They execrated place-begging; denied that "good appointments for Catholics" should be considered the showering of blessings on Ireland; and denounced the practice of "popular members" of shady character presenting stained-glass windows and altar gongs to the Catholic chapels whenever a general election was at hand. Above all, they

dared to say that the traffic in tidewaiterships and postmasterships and treasury clerkships was demoralising, and should be put down. It was little less than a revolution these men attempted in the whole system of Irish politics. O'Connell himself they greatly revered; they accepted his policy, were loyal to his authority, were grateful for his services. But they waged unconcealed war with the class of men who, in a great degree, surrounded him, and with the low tone of public morality which then seemed prevalent. The regenerated Ireland of their dreams was not to arise under such influences as these. They preached the need of better men and a bolder policy, and strongly impressed on the people that if they valued national liberty they must cultivate the virtues without which such a blessing would fly their grasp.

> For Freedom comes from God's right hand,
> And needs a godly train;
> 'Tis *righteous* men can make our land
> A Nation once again.

So sang the bard of the party. So spoke all its orators.

Such was Young Ireland in its early career. Of the men who founded or constituted that

party more than thirty years ago few now survive. Nearly all have passed away; and

> Their graves are severed far and wide
> By mountain, stream, and sea.

Duffy—now Sir Charles Gavan Duffy, of Melbourne—has been Prime Minister of Victoria, and is perhaps the ablest and most statesmanlike man at present in public life at the antipodes. Darcy McGee, foully slain by an assassin's bullet at Ottawa in 1868, had also won, as a minister of the Crown in the free self-governed Dominion of Canada, a notable recognition of his splendid abilities. Meagher, the silver-tongued orator of Young Ireland, after a career full of vicissitudes, was United States Governor of Montana territory when he accidentally perished in the rapids of the Missouri. Davis died early, yet not before he had filled Ireland with admiration for his genius and love for his virtues. Dillon died in 1866, member of Parliament for Tipperary county. Martin and Ronayne are recent losses, having fallen in harness as parliamentary representatives. Mitchel, irreconcilable and defiant to the last, returned to Ireland in 1875, and died "in the arms of victory" as "member for Tipperary." O'Brien, the

leader of the party, sleeps in the family mausoleum at Rathronan; but on the most prominent site in the Irish metropolis his countrymen have raised a noble statue to perpetuate his memory. Richard O'Gorman enjoys in New York fame and fortune honourably achieved in the land of his adoption. Kevin Izod O'Doherty is now a prominent member of the Queensland legislature. Michael Doheny, a man of rare gifts as a writer and speaker, died sadly in New York. Richard Dalton Williams, the gentle bard of many an exquisite lay, reposes in a distant Louisiana grave. Denny Lane, poet and politician, happily still thinks and feels for Ireland in his pleasant home by the Lee. Beside these there might be named a goodly company of the less political and more literary type: John O'Hagan, now judge of a county court in Ireland; Samuel Ferguson, now Deputy Keeper of the Rolls; Denis Florence MacCarthy, D. MacNevin, Rev. Charles Meehan, John Edward Pigott, Michael J. Barry, James Clarence Mangan, and John Kells Ingram, LL.D., now a fellow of Trinity College, whose famous lyric, "Who fears to speak of Ninety-eight?" is the best known of all the seditious poetry of Young Ireland.

But the roll were incomplete indeed if from it were omitted three women who gave to Irish National poetry of the Young Ireland era its most striking characteristics: "Eva," "Mary," and "Speranza."

Eva Mary Kelly was the daughter of a county Galway gentleman, and could have been little more than a girl when the contributions bearing her pseudonym began to attract attention. A good idea of the Young Ireland poetry—at all events of the Young Ireland poetesses—may be gathered from one of her early contributions—'The People's Chief':—

The storms of enfranchised passions rise as the voice of the eagle screaming,
And we scatter now to the earth's four winds the memory of our dreaming!
The clouds but veil the lightning's bolt—Sibylline murmurs ring
In hollow tones from out the depths—the People seek their King!

Come forth, come forth, Anointed One! nor blazon nor honours bearing—
No "ancient line" be thy seal or sign, the crown of Humanity wearing—
Spring out, as lucent fountains spring, exulting from the ground—
Arise as Adam rose from God, with strength and knowledge crowned!

The leader of the world's wide host guiding our aspirations,
Wear thou the seamless garb of Truth sitting among the nations!
Thy foot is on the empty forms around in shivers cast—
We crush ye with the scorn of scorn exuvial of the past!

Come forth, come forth, O Man of men! to the cry of the gathering nations;
We watch on tow'r, we watch on the hill, pouring our invocations—
Our souls are sick of sounds and shades, that mock our shame and grief,
We hurl the Dagons from their seats, and call the lawful Chief!

Come forth, come forth, O Man of men! to the frenzy of our imploring,
The winged despair that no man can bear, up to the heavens soaring—
Come! Faith and Hope, and Love and Trust, upon their centre rock,
The wailing millions summon thee, amid the earthquake shock!

We've kept the weary watch of years, with a wild and heart-wrung yearning,
But the star of the Advent we sought in vain, calmly and purely burning;
False meteors flashed across the sky, and falsely led us on;
The parting of the strife is come—the spell is o'er and gone!

The future's closèd gates are now on their ponderous hinges jarring,
And there comes a sound as of winds and waves each with the other warring,
And forward bends the list'ning world, as to their eager ken
From out that dark and mystic land appears the Man of men!

Kevin O'Doherty (already mentioned) was at this time a young medical student in Dublin. From admiring "Eva's" poetry he took to admiring, that is, loving, herself. The outbreak of 1848, however, brought a rude interruption to Kevin's suit. He was writing unmistakably seditious prose while "Eva" was assailing the constituted authorities in rebel verse. Kevin was arrested and brought to trial. Twice the jury disagreed. The day before his third arraignment he was offered a virtual pardon—a merely nominal sentence—if he would plead guilty. He sent for Eva, and told her of the proposition. "It may seem as if I did not feel the certainty of losing you, perhaps for ever," said he; "but I don't like this idea of pleading guilty. Say what shall I do?" "Do?" answered the poetess; "why, be a man, and face the worst. I'll wait for you, however long the sentence may be." Next day fortune deserted Kevin. The jury found him guilty. The judge assigned him ten years' transportation. "Eva" was allowed to see him once more in the cell to say adieu. She whispered in his ear, "Be you faithful. *I'll wait.*" And she did. Years fled by, and the young exile was at length allowed once more to tread Irish soil. Two

days after he landed at Kingstown "Eva" was his bride.

Less happy was the romance of "Mary's" fate. She was a Munster lady, Miss Ellen Downing by name, and, like "Eva," formed an attachment for one of the Young Ireland writers. In "Forty-eight" he became a fugitive. Alas, in foreign climes he learned to forget home vows. "Mary" sank under the blow. She put by the lyre, and in utter seclusion from the world lingered for a while; but ere long the spring flowers bloomed on her grave.

"Speranza"—then Miss Elgee, now Lady Wilde—was incomparably the most brilliant of the galaxy. She was the daughter of the Rev. Mr. Elgee, Protestant rector of a parish in the county Wexford, and sister of the Hon. Judge Elgee, of New Orleans. Young, beautiful, highly educated, endowed with rarest gifts of intellect, her personal attractions, her cultivated mind, her originality and force of character, made her a central figure in Dublin society thirty years ago. In 1845 she married Sir William Robert Wilde, by whose death recently Ireland has lost one of its most distinguished archæologists. Down to almost

a recent period Lady Wilde continued her contributions to Irish national literature; ever and anon striking a chord in the old strain; always singing of hope and courage and truth. One of the last contributions I received from her hand for publication in the *Nation* affords a good illustration of the spirit which animated all "Speranza's" poems. Death had been busy just then striking down some of the most trusted of the Irish National leaders, and many circumstances led me to express one day in writing to her my utter disheartenment as to the outlook in Irish politics. A post or two subsequently brought me from Lady Wilde this address to her countrymen:—

Has the line of the patriots ended,
The race of the heroes failed,
That the bow of the mighty, unbended,
Falls slack from the hands of the quailed?
Or do graves lie too thick in the grass
For the chariot of Progress to pass?

Did the men of the past ever falter?
The stainless in name and fame;
They flung life's best gifts on the altar
To kindle the sacrifice flame,
Till it rose like a pillar of light,
Leading up from Egyptian night.

Oh! hearts all aflame with the daring
Of youth leaping forth into life!
Have ye courage to lift up, unfearing,
The banner fallen low in the strife,
From hands faint through life's deepest loss,
And bleeding from nails of the cross?

Can ye work on as they worked—unaided,
When all but honour seemed lost;
And give to your country, as they did,
All, without counting the cost?
For the children have risen since then
Up to the height of men.

Now swear by those pale martyr-faces
All worn by the furrows of tears,
By the lost youth no morrow replaces,
By all their long wasted years,
By the fires trod out on each hearth,
When the Exiles were driven forth;

By the young lives so vainly given,
By the raven hair blanched to grey,
By the strong spirits crushed and riven,
By the noble aims faded away,
By their brows, as the brows of a king,
Crowned by the circlet of suffering—

To strive as they strove, yet retrieving
The Cause from all shadow of blame,
In the Congress of Peoples achieving
A place for our nation and name;
Not by war between brothers in blood,
But by glory made perfect through good.

We are blind, not discerning the promise,
'Tis the sword of the Spirit that kills;
Give us Light, and the fetters fall from us,
For the strong soul is free when it wills;
Not our wrongs but our sins make the cloud
That darkens the land like a shroud.

With this sword like an archangel's gleaming,
Go war against Evil and Sin,
'Gainst the falsehood and meanness and seeming
That stifle the true life within.
Your bonds are the bonds of the soul,
Strike them off, and you spring to the goal!

O men who have passed through the furnace,
Assayed like the gold, and as pure!
By your strength can the weakest gain firmness,
The strongest may learn to endure,
When once they have chosen their part,
Though the sword may drive home to each heart.

O martyrs! The scorners may trample
On broken hearts strewed in their path!
But the young race, all flushed by example,
Will awake to the duties it hath,
And rekindle your own torch of Truth
With the passionate splendours of youth!

It was not as a poet Lady Wilde first became a contributor to the *Nation*. Some exceedingly able letters having appeared in that journal signed "John Fanshawe Ellis," the editor, Mr. Duffy, expressed, in the "Notices to Correspondents," a

desire to meet "Mr. Ellis." By return of post he was informed that he could do so by calling on a certain evening at the house of Dr. W. R. Wilde. Mr. Duffy went, and was received by the doctor, who, having chatted with him for a while, left the room and shortly returned leading by the hand "Mr. John Fanshawe Ellis" in the person of his wife, formerly Miss Jane Frances Elgee, "Speranza" of future fame. In truth, Lady Wilde could rouse the soul by thrilling prose as well as by impassioned song. In 1848 she was the Madame Roland of the Irish Gironde. When the struggle was over, and Gavan Duffy was on trial for high treason, amongst the articles read against him was one from the suppressed number of the *Nation*, entitled *Jacta Alea Est.* It was without example as a revolutionary appeal. Exquisitely beautiful as a piece of writing, it glowed with fiery incentive. It was in fact a prose-poem, a wild war-song, in which Ireland was called upon that day in the face of earth and heaven to invoke the *ultima ratio* of oppressed nations. The Attorney-General read the article amidst breathless silence. At its close there was a murmur of emotion in the densely crowded court, when suddenly a cry from the ladies' gallery startled every one. "I am the

culprit, if crime it be," was spoken in a woman's voice. It was the voice of queenly "Speranza." The article was from her pen.

The recognised leader, at all events the political chief, of the Young Ireland party was William Smith O'Brien. He was a Protestant gentleman of high character and influential position in Clare; his brother, Lord Inchiquin (at that time Sir Lucius O'Brien), being nearest male relative to the Marquis of Thomond. The family is undoubtedly of ancient and illustrious lineage, tracing in authenticated line from King Brian I., monarch of Ireland, whose overthrow of the Danish power at Clontarf was an event of European interest and importance in the eleventh century. In the reigns of Elizabeth and James the First most of the Irish chieftains who from time to time submitted or "attorned" to the English power undertook to accept English titles, and to give up their children (their next heirs, at all events) to be educated as Government "wards." The young hostages, for such in truth they were, in every case were brought up Protestants, so that few of the existing representatives of the ancient Milesian chieftainries now profess the Catholic faith.

Early in the seventeenth century an English

coronet sat on the brows of the Thomond chieftain. In the civil war of 1641 Morrough O'Brien, Earl of Thomond, espoused Cromwell's side, and was the terror of the Munster royalists. It was he who cannonaded and set fire to the cathedral of Cashel—magnificent even now in its ruins.

William Smith O'Brien was born in 1803, and was educated at Harrow and Trinity College, Cambridge. He early entered Parliament for one of what may be called the family seats as a staunch Conservative. Though strong Tories, and actively opposing O'Connell in his Emancipation agitation, the Thomond O'Briens were intensely Irish, and were extremely popular in Clare and Limerick. From 1826 to 1843 Smith O'Brien pursued in Parliament the career of an Irish "country-gentleman" Conservative, of rather liberal or popular inclinations, devoting himself actively to what would be called practical legislation affecting the material interests of Ireland. In 1843 he startled the country by publicly giving in his adhesion to the Repeal movement, stating that seventeen years' patient trial of the London Parliament had brought him conscientiously to this determination. By this step he not alone severed himself for ever

in public affairs from his lifetime associates and friends, but suffered estrangement in his own family, which he felt most acutely. He was, however, a man of invincible purpose, absolutely destitute of fear or vacillation in what he conceived to be the path of duty. He was the very soul of honour and truth. I doubt that Ireland ever knew a higher type of public virtue and personal integrity than William Smith O'Brien. Yet he lacked many essential qualifications of a great political leader. It was not because of his abilities, but of his virtues and of his commanding social position, that he rose to be the chief of an Irish party. He was proud, almost haughty, dignified and reserved in manner. His Conservatism never wholly abandoned him. Early associations left an indelible imprint on his character, opinions, and principles. He had a horror of revolutionary doctrines. No man in all the land seemed less likely to figure subsequently in history as a rebel chief.

His accession to the Repeal movement was the great event of the time. He was hailed as "the second man in Ireland," O'Connell being the first. I doubt that the old "Catholic Emancipation party," O'Connell's immediate following, ever took

cordially to him; but he soon became the head of the literary and educational party in the Repeal ranks, whose independence of thought and boldness of speech were daily alarming the Liberator. When at length matters came to a crisis in the association, and the secession described in a previous chapter took place, O'Brien, though greatly regretting the incident, withdrew with "Young Ireland," and thenceforth took his place as the recognised and responsible leader of the party.

I first met William Smith O'Brien in July 1848, three weeks before the catastrophe which consigned him to a traitor's doom. He was engaged in a tour of the south-western and southern counties, evidently anxious to satisfy himself as to the real state of public feeling, and, I have no doubt, the physical resources of the national party. He was to arrive at Glengariffe on his way, *viâ* Bantry, to a great parade or review of the Confederate clubs in Cork. The men of our coasts and mountains decided to give him a royal reception, and in a style characteristic of an aquatic community. Not only the fishing fleet of Bantry, but the boats of every seaside hamlet on creek and inlet for miles around, were to ac-

company him across the bay from Glengariffe to Bantry; a little fore-and-aft-schooner yacht of my father's having the envied honour of conveying the distinguished visitor. With flowing sheet we crossed the open bay, and reached the eastward point of Whiddy Island, that shields from ocean billow and gale the haven of Bantry. The instant we rounded the island there met our view a scene I shall never forget. A flotilla of some hundreds of boats here awaited us. Every crew had gone ashore and pulled green boughs from the trees, and fastened them upright on the gunwales, so that each boat was like a floating bower. When the *Independence*, quickly turning the point, shot into sight, there burst from the fleet a deafening shout, the bands struck up, the oarsmen gave way with a will; we pulled our fore-stay-sail aback so as to slow for them, and the whole procession crossed the harbour's wide expanse like Birnam Wood marching on Dunsinane.

When next I met O'Brien—it was in 1857—a sad chapter of Irish history had been added to the national annals. Thenceforth, to the hour of his death, we were closely associated as political and personal friends; but in the Young Ireland period, my only personal intercourse with, or

experience of, him was that of the memorable scene I have just described.*

One of the notable grounds of difference between the two sections of Repealers in O'Connell's association was the complaint of the Young Irelanders that the National movement was being conducted with too much of a religious bias; that is to say, in a way which seemed to assume that every patriotic Irishman must necessarily be a Catholic. O'Connell made the platform of the association ring with denunciations of every measure, prospect, or principle inimical to Catholic feeling. The Catholic Young Irelanders said that in a Catholic association this would be right and proper; but they asserted that in a public organisation, explicitly restricted to a purely political purpose, and in which Protestants and Catholics were alike engaged, it was out of place, and quite

* How warmly he remembered it, even amidst the gloom of a conviction for high treason, was shown by his forwarding to me from his cell in Richmond jail the music of a favourite song, with this inscription: "Presented to Alexander M. Sullivan by William S. O'Brien, in remembrance of his excursion by water from Glengariffe to Bantry, on board the yacht *Independence*, in July 1848; when this song was sung by a young lady.

"Richmond Prison: March 1849."

wrong. The contention over this issue grew very bitter. Out of it arose the imputation of "free-thinking" doctrines which some persons long sought to fasten on the Young Ireland party.

Hard things were said on both sides. The Old Irelanders anathematised the young men as infidels; the Young Irelanders denounced the old as bigots. The point involved was by no means trivial; it was of the first magnitude; it was vital for the future of Ireland: namely, whether combined effort between Protestant and Catholic Irishmen in purely political affairs was to be rendered impracticable. Although some of the "Young" party pushed their arguments in language that partook far too much of latitudinarianism, it is now recognised and confessed that on this occasion they defended a position the loss or surrender of which would have been simply disastrous. The utmost they were able to do at the time was to make a stout fight. Not until many years afterwards was the principle they thus contended for proclaimed and adopted as unquestioned and unquestionable in Irish affairs. Had they not fought for it then, a wall of brass might now be dividing into hostile camps Protestant and Catholic Irishmen. But their whole career was one of struggle,

unrequited by a single ray of immediate victory. Their break with O'Connell drew down on them long-enduring unpopularity. Their reprehensions of parliamentary corruption caused them to be derided as utopian purists. Their fight for religious tolerance exposed them to charges of infidelity. Their educational propaganda was scoffed at as boyish bubble-blowing. On nearly every point of their programme they seemed to fail. That is to say, they were wrecked as a party before leaf or blossom appeared to indicate that the seed they had planted with so much toil had not perished for ever. But we of to-day reap the fruits of their labours. They were the precursors of a better time.

CHAPTER VIII.

"FORTY-EIGHT."

EIGHTEEN hundred and forty-eight has been called, by Lord Normanby I believe, the "Year of Revolutions." It is certain that history supplies us with no similar spectacle of general and almost simultaneous outbreak in the capitals of Europe. The ideal "principles" of 1789 found at the time admirers and sympathisers in many lands; but so far from the overthrow of the French monarchy immediately calling forth like events elsewhere, Christendom stood aghast at the dread spectacle in Paris of men who—

> At Death's reeking altar like furies caressing
> The Young Hope of Freedom baptised it in blood.

There can be no doubt, however, that from the Place de la Bastille were scattered eventually over Europe ideas and doctrines which, ever since, have been in part the watchwords of human

liberty, and in part the shibboleths of anarchy and crime.

The French revolution of February 1848 was no such "bolt from the blue" as some have considered it. There were storm-flashes all around, gloom on every hand, and distant peals by the Adriatic. In November 1847 Austria commenced to occupy the Italian States; taking possession of Parma, Modena, and Reggio. Early in January 1848 there was an outbreak at Leghorn. On the 12th Palermo revolted against King Ferdinand, and a "constitution" was conceded. On the 13th the Emperor of Austria announced that he would make "no further concessions," and two days later Radetzky issued an order of the day commanding his troops to prepare for an immediate struggle. On the 29th the Constitution of 1812 was proclaimed in Naples, and on the 30th the Duke of Modena fled his capital. On the 8th of February the King of Sardinia followed the example set in Naples, and granted a "constitution." On the 11th the Grand Duke of Tuscany did the same. On the 22nd martial law was proclaimed in Lombardy; and on the same day Messina was bombarded by the Neapolitan troops.

"These events, it will be seen, bring us up to the very eve of the day on which Louis Philippe was swept from the French throne; yet it was in the midst of such ominous signs that the "citizen king" and his infatuated ministers were rushing blindly on their fate. On the 26th of December 1847 the first of the "reform banquets" was held at Rouen; 1800 persons attending. At this as at numerous similar demonstrations the toast of the king's health was omitted. On the 12th of February M. Guizot declared in the French Chamber against reform or concession. On the 21st the Paris reform banquet was proclaimed. On the 22nd the impeachment of M. Guizot was proposed in the Chamber, but the motion was triumphantly defeated; that "astute and far-seeing minister," as he was universally considered, laughing outright at the absurd and impotent proceeding. Within forty-eight hours he and his royal master were fugitives, and the monarchy of July was no more!

Scarcely had the astounding news from Paris burst upon us, when all around the European horizon, north, south, east, and west, the flames of revolution leaped to the sky. The crash of falling thrones, the roar of cannon, the shouts

of popular victory, filled the air. A fierce contagion seemed to spread all over the Continent. The Holy Alliance was in the dust, and a thousand voices from Milan to Berlin proclaimed that the deliverance of subject peoples was at hand.

Ireland could not escape the fever of the hour. It found her in circumstances that seemed to leave her little choice but to yield to its influence.

Eighteen months previously the severance between "Old" and "Young" Ireland had occurred. There were now two Repeal organisations; one, the original association founded by O'Connell, now feebly conducted by his son; the other, the "Irish Confederation" started by the seceding Young Irelanders, or "Confederates," as they came to be designated at this period. The secession, it will be remembered, although it had more real causes, was ostensibly provoked or produced by O'Connell's attempt to exact from all Repealers a declaration reprehending physical force. Although the Young Irelanders had on that occasion refused to sign a declaration which, as they contended, logically struck at some of the best and bravest men in the world's history, they really were at one with O'Connell as to reliance on moral and political influences alone for the achieve-

ment of Irish aims. No doubt they believed in the moral influence of physical resources and inculcated this doctrine with an earnestness that could not fail to alarm the old tribune. Scarcely, however, had the seceders—the party of the Left, so to speak, in the Repeal Association—attempted to carry on an agitation independently as the Irish Confederation, than it became evident there was an "Extreme Left" as well as a "Left Centre." Amidst the maddening scenes of Forty-six and Forty-seven a real "physical force party" began to be heard of, chiefly in wild declarations that it were better the people should perish arms in hand than rot away in thousands under a famine *régime*. No one seriously regarded these passionate exclamations at the time. Towards the close of 1847, however, conflict on the subject became inevitable. Mr. John Mitchel, one of the editors of the *Nation* newspaper, declared the time had come for calling upon the Irish people to face an armed struggle. Such a course was entirely opposed to the principles and policy of the journal to which he was attached, and was utterly condemned by Gavan Duffy and Darcy McGee, Mitchel's editorial colleagues. He retired from the *Nation*, and the controversy was carried into the

council-room of the Confederation. In the light of events that soon after became public history the statement must seem strange, yet true it is, that the most able and vehement opponents of Mitchel's physical force propositions were Smith O'Brien, John B. Dillon, Gavan Duffy, T. F. Meagher, Richard O'Gorman, Michael Doheny, Darcy McGee—the very men who, a few months later, were prisoners in dungeon bound, or fugitives on the hill-side, for participation in an Irish insurrection!

John Mitchel—the first man who, since Robert Emmet perished on the scaffold in 1803, preached an Irish insurrection and the total severance of Ireland from the British Crown—was the son of the Rev. John Mitchel, Unitarian Minister of Dungiven, county Derry. He was born in 1815, and was educated at Trinity College, Dublin. Like many another Trinity student, he early became a contributor to the *Nation* newspaper; and in 1845, on the death of Thomas Davis, accepted an editorial position on that journal, in conjunction with Charles Gavan Duffy and Thomas Darcy McGee. The stern Unitarian Ulsterman soon developed a decided bent in favour of what half a century before would be called "French prin-

ciples." He was republican and revolutionary. At all events, during the scenes of the famine period he quite drew away from the policy advocated by his colleagues, and eventually called upon the Irish Confederation to declare for a war of independence. He it was who revived the "Separatist" or revolutionary party in Irish politics. From 1803 up to 1845 no such party had any recognised or visible existence. There was, beyond question, disaffection in the country, a constantly maintained protest against, or passive resistance to, the existing state of things; but no one dreamed of a political aim beyond Repeal of the Union as a constitutional object to be attained by constitutional means. The era of revolt and rebellion seemed gone for ever. John Mitchel, however, thrust utterly aside the doctrines of loyalty and legality. He declared that constitutionalism was demoralising the country. By "blood and iron" alone could Ireland be saved.

These violent doctrines were abhorrent to Smith O'Brien, and indeed to nearly every one of the Confederation leaders. O'Brien declared that either he or Mitchel must quit the organisation. The question was publicly debated for two days at full meetings, and on the 5th of February 1848

the "war" party were utterly outvoted, and retired from the Confederation. Seven days afterwards John Mitchel, as if rendered desperate by this reprehension of his doctrines, started a weekly newspaper called the *United Irishman* to openly preach his policy of insurrection.

He was regarded as a madman. Young Irelanders and Old Irelanders alike laughed in derision or shouted in anger at this proceeding. But events were now near, which, all unforeseen as they were by Mitchel and by his opponents, were destined to put the desperate game completely into his hands.

The third number of the new journal had barely appeared when news of the French revolution burst on an astonished world. It set Ireland in a blaze. Each day added to the excitement. Every post brought tidings of some popular rising, invariably crowned with victory. Every bulletin, whether from Paris, Berlin, or Vienna, told the same story, preached, as it were, the same lesson: barricades in the streets, overthrow of the Government, triumph of the people. It may be doubted if the *United Irishman* would have lived through a third month but for this astounding turn of affairs. Now its every utterance was rapturously hailed

by a wildly excited multitude. What need to trace what may be easily understood—Ireland was irresistibly swept into the vortex of revolution. The popular leaders, who a month previously had publicly defeated Mitchel's pleadings for war, now caught the prevalent passion. Struck by the events they beheld, and the examples set on every side, they verily believed that Ireland had but to "go and do likewise," and the boon of national liberty would be conceded by England, probably without a blow.

Confederate "clubs" now sprang up all over the country, and arming and drilling were openly carried on. Mitchel's journal week by week laboured with fierce energy to hurry the conflict. The editor addressed letters through its pages to Lord Clarendon, the Irish Viceroy, styling him "Her Majesty's Executioner General and General Butcher of Ireland." He published instructions as to street warfare; noted the "Berlin system," and the "Milanese system," and the "Viennese system"; highly praised molten lead, crockeryware, broken bottles, and even cold vitriol, as good things for citizens, male or female, to fling from windows and housetops on hostile troops operating below. Of course Mitchel knew that this could not pos-

sibly be tolerated. His calculation was that the Government must surely seize him, but that before he could be struck down and his paper be suppressed he would have rendered revolution inevitable.

The Confederation leaders had indeed embraced the idea of an armed struggle, yet the divergence of principles between them and the Mitchel party was wide almost as ever. They seemed marching together on the one road, but it was hardly so. For a long time O'Brien and his friends held to a hope that eventually concession and arrangement between the Government and Ireland would avert collision. Mitchel, on the other hand, feared nothing more than compromise of any kind. They would fain proceed soberly upon the model of Washington and the Colonies; he was for following the example of Louis Blanc and the boulevards of Paris. The ideal struggle of their plans, if struggle there must be, was a well-prepared and carefully ordered appeal to arms,*

* A private letter written from his cell in Newgate prison by Gavan Duffy to O'Brien in the week preceding the outbreak, and found in O'Brien's portmanteau after his arrest, brings out very curiously these views:—

"I am glad to learn you are about to commence a series of meetings in Munster. There is no halfway house for you;

and so they would wait till autumn, when the harvest would be gathered in. "Rose-water revolutionists," Mitchel scornfully called them. "Fools, idiots," exclaimed one of his lieutenants; "they will wait till muskets are showered down to them from heaven, and angels sent to pull the triggers."

Behind all this argument for preparation and delay there undoubtedly existed what may be called the "conservative" ideas and principles, which some of the leading Confederates entertained. O'Brien stormed against "the Reds," as he called the more desperate and impatient men. They, on the other hand, denounced him as an "aristocrat" at heart, and a man whose weakness would be the ruin of the whole enterprise. Speaking with myself years afterwards, he referred bitterly to the reproaches cast upon him, for his

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you will be the head of the movement, loyally obeyed; and the revolution will be conducted with order and clemency, or the mere anarchists will prevail with the people, and our revolution will be a bloody chaos. You have at present Lafayette's place as painted by Lamartine, and I believe have fallen into Lafayette's error of not using it to all its effect and in all its resources. I am well aware that you do not desire to lead or influence others; but I believe with Lamartine that that feeling, which is a high civic virtue, is a vice in revolutions."

alleged "punctiliousness" and excessive alarm as to anti-social excesses. "I was ready to give my life in a fair fight for a nation's rights," said he; "but I was not willing to head a *jacquerie*."

But if the whilom Young Irelanders were thus split into two sections, led respectively by O'Brien and Mitchel, there was a third party to be taken into account, the O'Connellite Repealers. These were as hostile to the revolutionists—both "rose-water" and "vitriol"—as were the life-long partisans of imperial rule. On the occasion of a public banquet given to O'Brien, Meagher, and Mitchel in the city of Limerick in March 1848, an O'Connellite mob surrounded the hall and assailed the company in a scene of riot and bloodshed. The immediate cause of this astonishing proceeding was an attack on the memory of O'Connell in Mitchel's paper, the dead tribune having been contumeliously referred to for his "degrading and demoralising moral force doctrines."

One important class in Ireland—a class long accustomed to move with or head the people—throughout all this time set themselves invincibly against the contemplated insurrection: the Catholic clergy. They had from the first, as a body, regarded the Young Irelanders with suspicion.

They fancied they saw in this movement too much that was akin to the work of the Continental revolutionists, and greatly as they disliked the domination of England, they would prefer it a thousand times to such "liberty" as the Carbonari would proclaim. At this time, in 1848, the power of the Catholic priests was unbroken, was stronger than ever. The famine scenes, in which their love for the people was attested by heroism and self-sacrifice such as the world had never seen surpassed, had given them an influence which none could question or withstand. Their antagonism was fatal to the movement—more surely and infallibly fatal to it than all the power of the British Crown.

Lord Clarendon, though fully aware that the war-policy Young Irelanders were comparatively weak in numbers, evidently judged that an outbreak once begun might have an alarming development. He determined to strike quickly and strike hard. On the 21st of March O'Brien, Meagher, and Mitchel were arrested, the first two charged with seditious speeches, Mitchel with seditious writings. The prosecutions against O'Brien and Meagher on this indictment failed through disagreement of the juries. As to Mitchel,

before his trial by the ordinary course of procedure for sedition could be held, the Government passed through Parliament a new law called the "Treason Felony Act," which gave greater facilities for dealing with such offences. On the 22nd of May he was arraigned under the new act in Green Street Court-house, Dublin, and on the 26th was found guilty.

The Mitchelite party had determined and avowed that his conviction—any attempt to remove him from Dublin as a convict—should be the signal for a rising, and now the event had befallen. There can be no question that had they carried out their resolution a desperate and bloody conflict would have ensued. Mitchel possessed in a remarkable degree the power of inspiring personal attachment and devotion; and there were thousands of men in Dublin who would have given their lives to rescue him. The Government were aware of this, and occupied themselves in preparations for an outbreak in the metropolis. The Confederation leaders, however, who considered that any resort to arms before the autumn would be disastrous, strained every energy in dissuading the Mitchelites from the contemplated course of action. The whole of the day previous to the

conviction was spent in private negotiations, interviews, arguments, and appeals. This labour was prolonged far into the night, and it was only an hour or two before morning dawned on the 27th of May 1848 that Dublin was saved from the horrors of a sanguinary struggle.

The friends of Mitchel never concealed their displeasure at the countermand thus effected by the O'Brien party, and prophesied that the opportunity for a successful commencement of the national struggle had been blindly and culpably sacrificed. The consent of the Dublin clubs to abandon the rescue or rising on this occasion was obtained, however, only on the solemn undertaking of the Confederation chiefs that in the second week of August the standard of insurrection would absolutely be unfurled.

A rumour that some such dissuasion was being attempted—that Smith O'Brien and his friends were opposed to the intended conflict—spread through Dublin late on the evening of the 26th of May, and painful uncertainty and apprehension agitated the city next morning. The Government, though well informed through spies of everything that was passing, took measures in preparation for all possible eventualities. Mitchel was sentenced

to fourteen years' transportation beyond the seas. The court was densely crowded with his personal and political friends and former fellow-students of Trinity College. He heard the sentence with composure, and then a silence as if of the tomb fell on the throng as it was seen he was about to speak. He addressed the court in defiant tones. "My lords," said he, "I knew I was setting my life on that cast. The course which I have opened is only commenced. The Roman who saw his hand burning to ashes before the tyrant promised that three hundred should follow out his enterprise. Can I not promise for one—for two—for three—ay, for hundreds?" As he uttered these closing words he pointed first to John Martin, then to Devin Reilly, next to Thomas Francis Meagher, and so on to the throng of associates whom he saw crowding the galleries. A thundering cry rang through the building, "Promise for me, Mitchel! Promise for me!" and a rush was made to embrace him ere they should see him no more. The officers in wild dismay thought it meant a rescue. Arms were drawn; bugles in the street outside sounded the alarm; troops hurried up. A number of police flung themselves on Mitchel, tore him from the embrace of his excited friends, and hurried him

through the wicket that leads from the dock to the cells beneath.

It may be pronounced that in that moment the Irish insurrectionary movement of 1848 was put down.

At an early hour that morning the war-sloop *Shearwater* was drawn close to the north wall jetty at Dublin Quay. There she lay, with fires lighted and steam up, waiting the freight that was being prepared for her in Green Street Court-house. Scarcely had Mitchel been removed from the dock than he was heavily manacled, strong chains passing from his wrists to his ankles. Thus fettered he was hurried into a police van waiting outside the gateway, surrounded by dragoons with sabres drawn. At a signal the cavalcade dashed off, and skilfully making a detour of the city so as to avoid the streets wherein hostile crowds might have been assembled or barricades erected, they reached the *Shearwater* at the wharf. Mitchel was carried on board, and had scarcely touched the deck when the paddles were put in motion, the steamer swiftly sped to sea, and in a few hours the hills of Ireland had faded from view.

The news of his conviction and sentence, the

astounding intelligence that he was really gone, burst like a thunderclap on the clubs throughout the provinces. A cry of rage went up, and the Confederation chiefs were fiercely denounced for what was called their fatal cowardice. Confidence in their determination vanished. Unfortunately, from this date forward there was for them no retreating. They now flung themselves into the provinces, traversing the counties from east to west, addressing meetings, inspecting club organisations, inquiring as to armament, and exhorting the people to be ready for the fray. Of course the Government was not either inattentive or inactive. Troops were poured into the country; barracks were improvised, garrisons strengthened, gunboats moved into the rivers, flying camps established; every military disposition was made for encountering the insurrection.

In all their calculations the Confederate leaders had reckoned upon two months for preparation, which would bring them to the middle of August. By no legal process of arrest or prosecution known to them could their conviction be effected in a shorter space of time. Never once did they take into contemplation the possibility (and to men dealing with so terrible a problem it ought to have

been an obvious contingency) that the Government would dispense with the slow and tedious forms of ordinary procedure, and grasp them quickly with avenging hand. While O'Brien and Dillon and Meagher, O'Gorman and McGee, were scatterered through the country, arranging for the rising, lo! the news reached Dublin one day in the last week of July that the previous evening the Government had passed through Parliament a bill for suspending the *Habeas Corpus* Act. That night proclamations were issued for the arrest of the Confederate leaders, and considerable rewards were offered for their apprehension.

This news found O'Brien at Ballinkeele, in Wexford county. He moved rapidly from thence through Kilkenny into Tipperary, for the purpose of gathering, in the latter county, a considerable force with which to march upon Kilkenny city—this having been selected as the spot whence a provisional government was to issue its manifesto, calling Ireland to arms. Before any such purpose could be effected, he found himself surrounded by flying detachments of military and police. Between some of these and a body of the peasantry, who had assembled to escort him at the

village of Ballingary, a conflict ensued, the result of which showed him the utter hopelessness of the attempted rising, and in fact suppressed it there and then. As the people were gathering in thousands—and they would have assembled in numbers more than sufficient to have defeated any force that could then have been brought against him—the Catholic clergy appeared upon the scene. They rushed amidst the multitude, imploring them to desist from such an enterprise, pointing out the unpreparedness of the country, and demonstrating the too palpable fact that the Government were in a position to quench in blood any insurrectionary movement. "Where are your arms?" they said; —there were no arms. "Where is your commissariat?"—the multitude were absolutely without food. "Where are your artillery, your cavalry? Where are your leaders, your generals, your officers? What is your plan of campaign? Mr. O'Brien and Mr. Dillon are noble-minded men; but they are not men of military qualification. Are you not rushing to certain destruction?" These exhortations, poured forth with a vehemence almost indescribable, had a profound effect. The gathering thousands melted slowly away, and O'Brien, dismayed, astounded, and sick at heart,

found himself at the head, not of 50,000 stalwart Tipperary men, armed and equipped for a national struggle, but a few hundred half-clad and wholly unarmed peasantry. Scarcely had they set forth when they encountered one of the police detachments. A skirmish took place. The police retreated into a substantially built farmhouse close by, which, situated as it was, they could have held against ten times their own force of military men without artillery. The attempt of the peasantry to storm it was disastrous, as O'Brien forbade imperatively the execution of the only resort which could have compelled its evacuation. Three of his subordinates had brought up loads of hay and straw to fire the building. It was the house of a widow, whose five children were at the moment within. She rushed to the Rebel Chief, flung herself on her knees, and asked him if he was going to stain his name and cause by an act so barbarous as the destruction of her little ones. O'Brien immediately ordered the combustibles to be thrown aside, although a deadly fusilade from the police force within was at the moment decimating his followers. These, disgusted with a tenderness of feeling which they considered out of place on such an occasion, abandoned the siege of

the building, and dispersed homewards. Ere the evening fell, O'Brien, accompanied by two or three faithful adherents, was a fugitive in the defiles of the Kilnamanagh mountains. No better success awaited his subordinates elsewhere. In May they had prevented a rising; now they found the country would not rise at their call.

Soon after Mitchel's transportation, Duffy was arrested in Dublin, and on the 28th of July armed police broke into the *Nation* office, seized the number of the paper being then printed, smashed up the types, and carried off to the Castle all the documents they could find. Throughout the country arrests and seizures of arms were made on all hands. Every day the *Hue and Cry* contained new proclamations and new lists of fugitives personally described. There was no longer any question of resistance. Never was collapse more complete. The fatal war-fever that came in a day vanished almost as rapidly. Suddenly every one appeared astounded at the madness of what had been contemplated; but somehow very few seemed to have perceived it a month before.

Throughout the remaining months of the year

Ireland was given over to the gloomy scenes of special commissions, state trials, and death-sentences. Of the leaders or prominent actors in this abortive insurrection, O'Brien, Meagher, MacManus, Martin, and O'Doherty were convicted; Dillon, O'Gorman, and Doheny succeeded in accomplishing their escape to America. O'Brien, Meagher, and MacManus, with one of their devoted companions in danger, Patrick O'Donoghue by name, having been convicted of high treason, were sentenced to death; but by authority of a specially passed act of Parliament, the barbarous penalty of hanging, disembowelling, and quartering, to which they were formally adjudged, was commuted into transportation beyond the seas for life. Duffy was thrice brought to trial; but although the Crown made desperate efforts to effect his conviction, the prosecution each time broke down, baffled by the splendid abilities of the defence conducted by Mr. Isaac Butt, Q.C. Eventually the proceedings against him were abandoned. Of less important participators numbers were convicted, and hundreds fled the country never to return. "Forty-eight" cost Ireland dearly —not alone in the sacrifice of some of her best and noblest sons, led to immolate themselves in such

desperate enterprise as revolution, but in the terrible reaction, the prostration, the terrorism, the disorganisation that ensued. Through many a long and dreary year, the country suffered for the delirium of that time.

CHAPTER IX.

AFTER-SCENES.

A SHOT fired from that farmhouse fortalice at Ballingary on the 29th of July went very near to diverting, in a remarkable manner, the current of recent Irish history. In the deadly fire which the police directed on the insurgents, a bullet struck a young Kilkenny engineer student (who was acting as aide or lieutenant to O'Brien), badly shattering his leg, and otherwise disabling him. Disregarding his wound, he refused to retire till the utter failure of the attack was evident, and the people were in full retreat. Then he was borne from the spot and hurried off to the mountains, where, hidden in a peasant sheeling, he lay till he was so far recovered as to be able to continue his flight. His name was James Stephens. That bullet missed the life of the future leader and chief of the Fenian conspiracy.

He and Michael Doheny linked their fortunes as fugitives; and of all the narratives of escape that might be told of that unhappy time—stories of painful sufferings, of keen privations, of desperate hazards, and almost fatal dangers—theirs unquestionably would be the most astonishing. For two months they were hunted over mountain and moor, through the southern and south-western seaboard counties; hiding in the heather and the bogside, or sheltered in some peasant's hut, sentinelled in their brief and feverish slumbers by the humble owner of the dwelling. Frequently the closeness of pursuit compelled them to double back on the district it had cost them much suffering to get over; and often, in order to reach a point directly distant but an hour's walk, they had to make a detour of several miles. Their great anxiety was to reach some harbour whence a boat might put them off to a passing ship. Doheny tells of their endeavours to cross the Knockmeldoun Mountains, and how on the southern side of those lofty hills they came on the famous Trappist monastery of Melleray: "It was Sunday; the cold and wet of the previous evening had given way to calm and sunshine, and we made rapid way along the slopes of the Comerahs. The greatest difficulty

we experienced was in passing deep ravines. The steep ascent and descent were usually wooded and covered with furze and briars. Far below gurgled a rapid and swollen mountain stream, which we crossed without undressing, and always experienced the greatest relief from the cold running water. But toiling our upward way through trees and thorny shrubs was excessively fatiguing. About three o'clock in the evening we reached the picturesque grounds of Mount Melleray Abbey. We had then travelled thirty miles of mountain without any food. The well-known hospitality of the brothers was a great temptation to men in our situation, pressed by toil and hunger; but we felt that we possibly might compromise the abbot and brethren, and we determined on not making ourselves known. We entered the beautiful chapel of the abbey and ascended the gallery while vespers were being sung. We found we were alone on the gallery, and had an opportunity of changing our stockings and wiping the blood from our feet. We remained upwards of an hour, and then set out but little refreshed."

Skirting Cork city they passed westward to the wild mountain regions of Bantry, Glengariffe, and Kenmare. Doheny's literary habits and poetic

inspirations were not to be suppressed, if indeed the latter were not rather aroused into greater activity, by the sufferings and perils of an outlaw's life. In the course of this flight he penned several of his most touching ballads, jotting down the words on the back of an old letter, or on the margin of a newspaper. In one of these poems, addressed to Ireland, and written in a hut on the Glengariffe mountains, he bewails the fate of himself and comrades :—

* * * * * *

'Twas told of thee the world around,
'Twas hoped from thee by all,
That with one gallant sunward bound
Thou'dst burst long ages' thrall.
The moment came, alas! and those
Who perilled all for thee
Were cursed and branded as thy foes;
A cuisla gal ma chree.

* * * * * *

I've run the outlaw's brief career,
And borne his load of ill—
The troubled rest, the ceaseless fear—
With fixed sustaining will;
And should his last dark chance befall,
Even that will welcome be;
In death I'll love thee most of all—
A cuisla gal ma chree.

In one of his gloomiest and most despondent

hours—news had reached him of the lamentable privations endured by Mrs. Doheny in her endeavours to track him through the hills—he wrote 'The Outlaw's Wife,' of which the following is the first stanza :—

Sadly silent she sits with her head on her hand,
While she prays in her heart to the Ruler above
To protect and to guide to some happier land
The joy of her soul and the spouse of her love;
And she marks by her pulses so wild in their play
The slow progress of time as it straggles along;
And she lists to the wind as 'tis moaning away,
And she deems it the chaunt of some funeral song.

At Kenmare Doheny and Stephens met the friendly hearts and hands that were eventually to effect their rescue. I believe I name publicly for the first time the family to whom those hapless fugitives were thus indebted—the kinsmen and friends of Mr. MacCarthy Downing, now member of Parliament for Cork county. Indeed, I believe that honourable gentleman himself was most directly instrumental in arranging the escape. Stephens was got off to France as a servant, accompanying a lady of the family. Doheny went on board the *Sabrina* steamer at Cork quay driving some bullocks which he was to accompany to Bristol. From the latter city he easily made his way to

London, and thence to Paris, where not only Stephens, his late companion, but others of the escaped Confederate leaders gave him an enthusiastic welcome.

He proceeded soon after to America, and settled in New York; but Fortune did not smile on him, though if a genial nature and a generous heart could have commanded wealth, Doheny should have been a millionaire. He died in 1862. Two little children, boys of three and five years respectively, accompanied much of their mother's wanderings while the father was a fugitive in 1848. Eighteen hundred and sixty-seven found them grown to man's estate, and inmates of Mountjoy Prison, Dublin, for complicity in the Fenian conspiracy!

It is a singular fact that none of the numerous insurgent fugitives who were hiding or flying all over the country were betrayed to their pursuers. There was a price upon each head—a tempting reward for apprehension or information—and minute personal descriptions of the accused, as given in the *Hue and Cry*, were profusely distributed to assist in identification.* They had

* Some of these descriptions in the Government *Hue and Cry* were certainly remarkable literary efforts. "Thomas D. Wright," one of the Tipperary insurgents, is set down as "very talkative,

perforce to demand shelter and rest from the poorest of the poor; the famine still lingered in the land; and in no case were the peasants at a loss to guess who these applicants for con-

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and thinks himself a great politician; supposed to be at present in the City or Cove of Cork, as he sailed to America from Liverpool on the 13th of August last." "John Sexton" was described as having "two blue eyes and blind of one of them"; but in a subsequent issue this was corrected, and he was pictured as a man "with one blue eye and blind of one eye." "John Lee" is declared to have "brown eyes which appears as if he had shaved his whiskers." The following is copied *verbatim et literatim* from the *Hue and Cry* of December 2, 1848: "Description of a woman name unknown who stands charged with having on the 26 Nov. at Ballyhenry in the Barony of Ikerin entered the dwelling-house of Thomas Sweeny and threatened to blow the contents of a pistol through James Hendy who lived in the next house to said Sweeny but who happened to be from home at the time: She is twenty-three years of age five feet nine inches high, stout make, fair complexion, fair hair, grey eyes; wore a felt hat, blue body coat, dark trousers, and striped vest, a native of the county Tipperary."

In 1857, while travelling in America, I found myself a welcome guest in a charming little frame-work villa near Binghampton, at the junction of the Susquehanna and the Chenango rivers. My host, then a happy and prosperous member of the American bar, was the identical "Thomas D. Wright" who, according to the *Hue and Cry* of August 1848, was "supposed to be at present in the City or Cove of Cork" because "he sailed to America" three weeks previously.

cealment were. The wretched owners of hovels where some of them were housed for days were utterly destitute. I myself knew one such instance. Dermeen Lynch, of Dromgarriff, beneath whose roof Doheny and Stephens were hidden and fed for two days, was a recipient of out-door relief. Dermeen knew very well he had but to give a signal to the police sergeant in the Glen below, and £300—"wealth untold" in his estimation—was within his grasp. But his sorest trouble was lest harm should overtake them while under his roof. I often talked with him and his wife over it all afterwards. He was terribly sorry they ever came, and very glad when they went away; but while they were on his floor he would die rather than "sell" them.

It was said that the father of Thomas Francis Meagher—a wealthy Waterford merchant, who greatly deplored "Tom's" rebellious politics—employed four brigantines to cruise off the southern and western coasts to facilitate his escape. But he never got far from the scene of the outbreak in Tipperary. He certainly might have made good his way out of the country had he cared to put forth any great exertion so to do; but seeing how completely the attempt he was engaged in

had failed, he thought a prompt and decisive acquiescence in that result on the part of the leaders and their adherents would avert much public disturbance and personal suffering. He thought also that such a course on the part of the leaders, like himself, as yet at large, might secure better terms for those who had been captured. Accordingly from his asylum in the mountains he carried on, through an influential Catholic clergyman of the district, a correspondence or negotiation with the Government, offering to surrender and to advise his friends to a like course, on certain conditions assured for O'Brien. These efforts came to naught. On the night of the 12th of August a police patrol on the road from Cashel to Holycross passed three pedestrians. The usual friendly salutations were exchanged between the parties, and each went its way. Suddenly it occurred to the police officer that there was something beyond the common in the voice and manner of the traveller who had spoken to him. He turned back and overtook the party. He wished to question one of them privately, but the individual thus accosted resented such a course. "Whatever you have to say to me must be said in the hearing of my friends," he exclaimed. "I have to call upon

you, then, in the Queen's name to tell me who ye are," said the sergeant, adding, rather apologetically, "You know these are troubled times, gentlemen, and we are obliged to be particular." "All quite right, my friend," replied the spokesman of the party. "I am Thomas Francis Meagher." "I," said one of his companions, "am Maurice Richard Leyne";* "And I," added the other, "am Patrick O'Donohue."

* Leyne was a fine dashing young fellow; genial, generous, chivalrous. He was a relative of O'Connell, and was the only member of that family who sided with the Young Ireland party against the great tribune. In July 1854 he died, I might almost say in my arms, not far from the scene of this arrest. The day after we had buried him in the churchyard of Thurles, two of his brothers and myself strolled to Holycross, distant three miles, to see the ruined abbey of that name. We rested awhile and took some refreshment in the neat little wayside inn at the abbey gate. One of my companions, whose resemblance to his brother Maurice was remarkable, entered into conversation with the proprietress as she busied herself in attending to us. After awhile she looked earnestly at him. "If you please, sir, are you anything to the gentleman that was buried in town yesterday?" she inquired. "Yes," he replied; "why do you ask?" Her eyes filled with tears. "Oh, you are so like him, as he sat there, where you are sitting this blessed minute, and asked me for a little bread and milk, the evening before he and Mr. Meagher and the other gentleman were took by the police on the road beyond!" And the poor woman sobbed outright as she gave us several particulars of their movements on that day and night. Two years ago, passing through Thurles, I

Dillon, after severe sufferings, got on board an emigrant ship sailing from Galway to New York. He was disguised as a Catholic priest. Some clerical friend fully equipped him in suitable attire, and presented him with a missal, which, by the way, it was remarked he read (or pretended to be reading) a great deal oftener than a veritable clergyman would think of doing. On board the same ship, utterly unknown to him, was a personal friend, another of the fugitives, who was equally ignorant of Dillon's presence—Mr. Patrick J. Smyth, now member of Parliament for Westmeath. The vessel had been to sea for some days when Dillon was alarmed by noticing one of the steerage passengers—a man dressed as a cattle-drover — eyeing him in a decidedly suspicious manner. "It is a detective," thought the pseudo priest; "he recognises me, and I am lost." Next day his embarrassment was intensified by finding the countryman, ever and anon, throwing rather familiar glances and furtive nods and winks at

sought the grave of my friend Leyne. The grass was high in the rank soil; only after long search I found the spot. Above it stood a simple slab, on which some kindly hand had placed his name and an apt quotation, "He whose virtues deserved a temple, now scarce commands a stone."

him. Eventually, coming close up to him on one pretext or another, the cattle-drover, in a hoarse under-breath, hurriedly whispered, "All right, *I'm Smyth.*" Dillon started back in utter amazement, exclaiming, "Smyth!" "Hush!" responded the other, "we may be watched"; and they separated in the style of priest and peasant, Dillon ostentatiously giving the "countryman" a parting benediction.

But a new trouble fell on "his reverence." Amongst the emigrants were a youthful pair of lovers, who, much mistrusting what uncertainties might befall in the great land beyond, suddenly conceived the idea of getting married there and then on board; "seeing as how there was a priest in the ship, just ready to hand." They applied to Dillon to perform the ceremony. His dismay was inconceivable. He most piously exhorted them to wait till they landed. No. "With the blessing of God, now was the time." He invented a dozen excuses, all in vain, until he fortunately bethought him of the plea that he had not "faculties," from his bishop that would avail in such a peculiar case.

An accident divulged his secret. One day the sea ran high and the ship pitched and rolled

violently. At dinner his reverence sat on the right hand of the captain, and was being helped to some mutton, when the ship suddenly lurched and flung dish, joint, and gravy full into his bosom. He bounced from his seat with a thundering oath, followed by a string of most unpriestly expletives, quite forgetting himself, till he saw the company staring at him in a strange way. The captain especially, who shouted in laughter, seemed enlightened by the incident. "Ah, my dear sir," said he to Dillon, "I have had my suspicions for some time. I can guess what you are. Be not afraid. You are safe from fear or harm." From that day forth Dillon and Smyth resumed their real character, and were the object of kindliest attention from the honest English sailor.

Richard O'Gorman—"Young Richard"—escaped in a ship sailing from Limerick to Constantinople. His father, Richard O'Gorman, senior, was a wealthy Dublin merchant, who took a leading part in the Catholic Emancipation and Repeal movements. The Irish metropolis boasted no man more esteemed for his personal virtues; none who stood higher in commercial or political integrity. The old gentleman seceded

along with the Young Irelanders from O'Connell, and was a member of the Irish Confederation. He was not, however, swept off his feet by the revolutionary "tidal wave" in February, and was, I believe, utterly opposed to the course of action into which his friends and associates—keener stroke still, his only son along with them—were rashly hurried. At Constantinople young O'Gorman and his friend John O'Donnell lay concealed until they were able to obtain passports to Algiers. John O'Mahony, a gentleman farmer of Kilbeheny, Tipperary, whose high treason contribution was an attempt to effect a rising during the progress of Smith O'Brien's trial, sailed from Bonmahon to Wales, and thence by way of London to Paris. MacManus was a prosperous forwarding agent in Liverpool when he suddenly quitted the counting-house and rushed across to Ireland to join Smith O'Brien, as whose second in command he figured at Ballingary Common. He succeeded in baffling all the vigilance of pursuit and getting on board an emigrant ship, the *N. D. Chase*, bound from Liverpool to America. With joyful heart he saw her put to sea; but unhappily for him some trifling mishap caused the captain to run for Queenstown. A merchant's clerk in Liverpool had, a week pr

viously, robbed his employers, and was supposed to have got off in this ship. She was boarded in Queenstown harbour by the police in quest of the absconding clerk. The passengers were paraded; the clerk was not found, but a Liverpool policeman quickly recognised a much more valuable prize in Terence Bellew MacManus.

There is in many respects a dismal sameness about state trials for high treason, and yet they seem to have a weird interest for spectator and for reader. Meagre and terse as are the reports which we possess of the so-called trials in which the last of the Tudors rid themselves of supposed or real "traitors," they have a gloomy fascination all their own, and portray for us more faithfully than many more elaborate efforts do the condition of public affairs at that time. It may be truly said that for four weeks, extending from the 23rd of September to the 21st of October, the attention of Ireland was riveted on the Tipperary County Court-house in Clonmel, where the insurgent leaders William Smith O'Brien, Thomas Francis Meagher, and Terence Bellew MacManus were on trial for their lives. O'Brien was defended by Mr. Whiteside, Q.C. (afterwards Lord Chief Justice of the Queen's Bench), Mr. Francis Fitzgerald,

Q.C., and Sir Coleman O'Loghlen, Q.C. Meagher was defended by Mr. Whiteside, Q.C., and Mr. Isaac Butt, Q.C.; MacManus by the same bar. Of their conviction there could have been little doubt. No skill of advocacy could struggle against the facts of the case. But there was at least one incident of the trials which created an unprecedented sensation. It became known that the defence intended to subpœna Major-General Sir Charles Napier and the Prime Minister, Lord John Russell. What was this for? It was for a purpose the effectuation of which, though subsequently found to be technically forbidden by the rules of evidence, would certainly have thrown a startling light upon the conduct and fate of the men in the dock. General Napier was summoned to give up a letter in his possession proving that men at that moment holding office as ministers of the Crown, Lord John Russell, the first minister, included, had in 1831–32 secretly devised and arranged for a proceeding precisely similar to that for which these prisoners were now on trial, namely, a resort to arms, a popular rising, in order to compel the Government to yield the popular demands. It was, to be sure, pretty well known that at that period the English Reform

leaders were under the impression the threatened "march of Birmingham on London" might have to be carried out; but that they had gone so far as to arrange details of the revolutionary movement, and had selected the military men on whom they relied to take command of the insurgents, was a story which staggered all belief. Yet so it was. In truth, the course adopted by the Irish Repeal Confederates in 1848 was in many respects almost identical with that adopted by the English Reform Confederates in 1831 and 1832. In the summer of 1831 the Lords threw out the Reform Bill, and the Reform Ministry appealed to the country in a general election. Not alone in this direction was their appeal energetically pushed. It was also decided that failing any other means an armed revolution was to clear the road blocked up by the obstructive House of Peers. Political clubs or "unions" were established all over the country, the "National Political Union" of London being the head centre. Every Englishman between twenty-five and forty-five was called on to enrol himself, and to learn "how to resist oppression." The great object was to effect what the *Times* of that date called "a national armament for a reform of law." So much was open, public,

known to the world. But something of what was passing behind the scenes is revealed in the following "secret and confidential" letter of Lord Melbourne's private secretary, Mr. Thomas Young, to General C. J. Napier, written from the Home Office ("H. O.") on the date which it bears:—

H. O., June 25, '32.

MY DEAR NAPIER,

Sir H. Bunbury told me of your wise determination not to become "a parliament man," at least for the present. The offer was very tempting, and you have the more merit in declining. I refrained from writing to you while the matter was undecided, for I did not wish to obtrude my opinion; but I felt that reason was against your acceptance, as your health, your purse, and your comfort would all have suffered by your attendance in the House of Commons. The History must have been laid aside. You could not, moreover, have been a calm and silent member, but would have been exerting yourself to push onward the movement faster than it probably will march, or than, perhaps, all things considered, it is desirable that it should march.

Let us go back a moment.

The display of energy, and a readiness to act, on the part of the people when the Duke of W—— was on the eve of coming in was greater far than I expected. I speak not of the Cockneys, but of the men in the north—Glasgow, Newcastle, Birmingham. Are you aware that in the event of a fight you were to be invited to take the command at Birmingham? Parkes got a frank from me for you with that view, but had no occasion to send it. Had he written I should have fired a despatch at you with my friendly and anxious counsel and

entreaty to keep you quiet and not to stir from Freshford. It is not well to enter *early* into revolutions—the first fall victims. What do you think would have happened? The Reformers—Place, &c.—talked big to me, and felt assured of success. The run upon the banks, and the barricading of the populous country towns, would have brought matters to a crisis; a week they, the Reformers, thought would finish the business. They meant so to agitate here that no soldiers could have been spared from London; and the army is too small elsewhere to have put down the rebels. In Scotland I believe the most effectual blow would have been struck; and it seems difficult to have resisted the popular movement. The Tories, however, say the Duke would have succeeded. No doubt the discipline under which soldiers live might have proved a stronger element than the public enthusiasm, *i.e.*, unless the latter was universal or extensive, and then it would have carried all before it. The task would have been to bring back society to its former quiet state. Thank God we have been spared the trial; but as a matter of speculation, tell me what you think would have been the result? Am I right in my conjecture that you would have refused the Birmingham invite and kept your sword in its scabbard?—Yours ever truly,

T. Y.

Thanks for your first volume—Jones has come back better.

This was very much the plan O'Brien, Meagher, and Dillon seemed to have in view. By keeping the metropolis in a state of excitement, menace, and alarm, the chief portion of the troops would be detained therein, while "the barricading of the populous towns" would have brought matters to

a crisis in the provinces. They too thought it would be "difficult to have resisted the popular movement," and that "public enthusiasm" "would have carried all before it." None of them, however, could now exclaim, "Thank God we have been spared the trial." They were not spared it, and the result to them was ruin.

As to "my dear Napier," the Reform Confederates in the "H. O." mistook their man. Sir Charles was much of a Radical, but he was more of a soldier. He had very stern ideas of discipline and loyalty, and he quite fired up on receipt of "T. Y.'s" astounding communication, in which he was so cleverly "felt" as to whether he would not have drawn his sword as an insurgent commander. He replied in terms of strong indignation. He called the proposition an insult to his honour as a soldier and his loyalty as a subject. As to the communication being "confidential," he repelled any obligation of confidence between him and "conspirators." He would, however, he said, make no public use of the letter unless in one event, namely, if ever any of the men who were concerned in this 1831 business attempted to prosecute others for similar designs, he would hold himself at liberty to hand over the letter as a

punishment on its authors, and a warning to all whom it might concern.

This event exactly had arisen, and Sir Charles at once gave "T. Y.'s" letter to the public.

It was not allowed to be put in evidence at Clonmel. Two wrongs do not make a right. In the eye of the law it could be no excuse for William Smith O'Brien that Lord Melbourne or Mr. Attwood, or Lord John Russell or Mr. Young, had intended if necessary to do in 1831 what he conspired to attempt in 1848. So O'Brien and Meagher, and MacManus and O'Donohue, having been found guilty of high treason, were sentenced to be hanged, beheaded, disembowelled, and quartered.

The revelations of the "T. Y." letter had, however, one striking result—they rendered impossible the execution of this death-sentence. Although in Spain the successful rebel of Monday who is the prime minister of Tuesday orders the unsuccessful conspirator of Wednesday to be shot on Thursday, it was felt that for "T. Y.'s" friends to advise the Queen's signature to O'Brien's death-warrant would be too much for public opinion. There was a legal difficulty in the way of avoiding such a terrible event; but *ex post facto* legislation

is quite common and very convenient in Irish affairs. A special act was passed whereby the capital sentences were commuted in each case to penal servitude beyond the seas for life; and on the 29th of July 1849, the first anniversary of the abortive rising, the war-brig *Swiftsure* sailed from Kingstown harbour, bearing O'Brien, Meagher, MacManus, and O'Donohue to the convict settlements of Australia.

CHAPTER X.

THE CRIMSON STAIN.

At eleven o'clock on the morning of Wednesday, 1st of March 1848, three murderers were led out to die in front of Clonmel jail. Around the scaffold were assembled a dense throng of people, townsmen and peasants, men and women; every eye strained on the three gibbets and the three looped cords that swayed in the morning breeze. In all the crowd no voice denied that these men deserved their doom. The crime was black; the evidence clear; the conviction just. And yet, even before the dismal procession of the condemned came into view, pitying exclamations might be heard bewailing that they should perish thus "so young." Close by the scaffold glittered the bayonets of two companies of the 47th, and on the flank the drawn sabres of the 4th Light Dragoons. It was plain that the authorities did not choose to trust

merely to the strong party of police which occupied the other side to guard against eventualities.

A murmur from the crowd directed attention to a figure which appeared on the scaffold. It was the hangman. He coolly examined the ropes, and looked to the nooze of each to see whether it ran smoothly. He tried the drops or traps, and shot the bolts to ascertain whether they were clear and free. So far the people gazed silently, as these performances were gone through; but when they saw him pull out of his pocket a piece of soap or grease and apply it to the ropes, a yell of indignation arose, and he disappeared through the doorway into the jail amidst a storm of execration.

Soon the prison bell began to toll, and as the death-knell sounded, the crowd fell on their knees. Through the doorway leading to the scaffold there emerged the tall figure of Father John Power (the present Catholic Bishop of Waterford), in surplice and soutane; his voice, reciting the office for the dying, reaching to the farthest bound of the hushed multitude. Then came the prisoners—three young men; two of them brothers; and foul as was their crime, one now could understand the

compassion of the women in the crowd. They were really fine-looking young peasants; the eldest could hardly have been twenty-three. The brothers, Henry and Philip Cody, were to be executed for the murder of Laurence Madden, nine months before; and John Lonergan—"the widow's son," as he was designated by the witnesses on the trial—for shooting Mr. William Rae, J.P., at Rockwell. The executioner first put the rope around the neck of Lonergan, who asked the people all to pray for him. Henry Cody, who stood at the narrow doorway, saw the process which was so soon to be gone through with himself. As if in answer to Lonergan's appeal, he cried aloud, "Lord Jesus, have mercy on us! Lord, have mercy on him! Lord, have mercy on us!" Then the hangman approached the younger Cody, and, having put the cap on his face, began to place the nooze on his neck. In so doing, it is thought, he made some observation which reached Henry's ear. At sound of the voice he started as if pierced by an arrow. He ceased praying, and was observed to tremble from head to foot. The fact is, it was currently reported, though I believe quite groundlessly, that the man who acted as executioner was the identical Crown witness

who had, as the people expressed it, "sworn away the lives" of the hapless brothers. That he marvellously resembled him is, at all events, indubitable; and whether the elder Cody had heard the rumour, or recognised, as he fancied, the voice of the "approver," there is now no knowing; but plainly, he believed this was the man. He sprang at the hangman, and, with his bound and manacled hands, smote him again and again. Then he seized him, dragged him to the front, and by main force tried to fling him over the railing of the scaffold. It was an awful, a horrible sight! Murderer and hangman gripped in deadly struggle; the latter screaming aloud for mercy and for help. Beyond doubt, Cody, even with arms strapped and pinioned, would have succeeded in his deadly purpose had not some of the warders rushed over. The younger brother heard the struggle, and knew something unusual had happened; but, having the cap over his face, he could not see. Father Power, fearful lest he might know what it was, kept resolutely at his side, fervently pouring prayers and exhortations into his ear. At last, Philip heard Henry's voice in the struggle, and, despite all the priest could do, he managed to tear the covering from his face, when

lo! he saw his brother and the hangman in frightful encounter. He tried to rush to Henry's aid, but Father Power flung his arms around him. "Oh! my child, my child! for the sake of that Jesus, your God who gave Himself to His executioners, do not, do not. Oh, think of the Son of God—oh, think you are going to meet your Creator and Judge!" and the good priest, fairly overcome, sobbed aloud. Then the unhappy young man let his head fall on Father Power's shoulder, and he too cried like a child: "Oh, Henry! Henry! My brother! My brother! Oh, God! Oh, God!"

Eye-witnesses of that scene speak of it to-day only with a shudder. The idea of launching into the presence of God men with souls aflame with passion of deadliest hate and vengeance was something dreadful to contemplate; and Father Power appealed to the sheriff to postpone for a while the execution. That gentleman himself, utterly shocked and indeed overcome, would willingly have complied, but there was a legal compulsion then and there to carry out the law; and the brothers, who for a moment had been taken to the rear of the scaffold, were again brought forward. The people, who throughout had given way to the

deepest emotion—women crying and wailing, others praying aloud, and several fainting—thought, for a moment, the execution would be put off. When they saw the condemned led out again, a roar of grief and anger rose from the crowd, but at a gesture from Father Power they suddenly hushed, and once more sank on their knees. The three men were held on the traps; the bolts were drawn, and justice was vindicated, under circumstances such as I hope may never be paralleled in our land.

This was but one day's work out of several of a similar character in that spring of 1848. The assizes that year were heavy, and Tipperary, unfortunately, had contributed a gloomy calendar. The peasantry of that county, physically one of the finest peoples in the world, have strong characteristics, strangely mixed vices and virtues. They are hot and passionate; brave and high-spirited; deadly in their vengeance; generous, hospitable; ready to repay kindness with kindness, hate with hate, violence with violence. When not under the influence of passion, "more fearful than the storm that sweeps their hills," they are one of the most peaceable, orderly, and moral populations in the empire. There seems to be hardly any middle

character in Tipperary assizes. The calendar is either a blank, as to serious offences, or is black with crimes that tell how lightly human life is valued where revenge reduces men to savagery. Many of the most serious of these outbursts in that county had their origin in provocation in which technical law and actual justice were wofully antagonised; and the facts that most deeply shock one in contemplating the subject—the cowardly selfishness or guilty connivance of eye-witnesses of murder, or the sympathy and shelter extended to the assassin—are the evil and accursed fruit of a system which had made the people look upon "law" as an enemy, not a protector.

It is now some twenty years ago since, on the occasion of an execution for murder in Tipperary which agitated all Ireland—the hanging of the brothers Cormack for the murder of Mr. Ellis, of Templemore—I decided to go down specially to visit the scene of the crime; being anxious to satisfy myself as to the controversy then raging in reference to the innocence or guilt of the executed men. During my stay I was the guest of a gentleman whose friendship was a passport to the intimate confidence of the peasantry. I

spent some time in driving and riding with him through the county; and not only did I ascertain the real history of the particular case I came to investigate, but I gathered from sources accessible to few a goodly store of information on the whole subject of the land feud in Tipperary. It was very evident that nothing less than a state of war, sullenly smouldering or fiercely bursting into flame, had prevailed for half a century between class and class in that county. The later troubles commenced with nocturnal raids for arms. Long before they took the shape of personal violence or direct attempt on life, the disturbances in Tipperary seemed to have entirely for their object the possession of such guns, pistols, or blunderbusses as could be obtained by attacking the houses of the gentry. Every night the country was scoured by parties of men demanding arms, and taking them by force where refused. As might have been easily foreseen, this very speedily and inevitably led to life-taking on both sides; and then, blood once spilt, a dreadful state of things ensued. The audacity and daring of the peasantry in some of these attacks was truly marvellous. They publicly erected a barricade across the mail-coach road in the parish of Boherlahan,

near Clonoulty, in order to rob, *not* the mail bag or its contents, but the arms of the mail guard. The fact that the coach was known to have a dragoon escort, so far from deterring them, only offered a greater inducement to the enterprise; for the dragoons carried sabres and carbines. Two of the peasantry, a man named Lahy, and another named Ryan, were told off the night before to encounter the dragoons while two others attacked the coach. At the first volley one of the dragoons fell dead. The other fled. The coach guards made more resolute defence. For five minutes a deadly fire was maintained between them and the assailants; but eventually the latter prevailed, and all the guns and pistols in the coach, eleven stand of arms, were handed over. Strange to say, none of the attacking party were seriously wounded, though beside the dragoon who was killed some of the guards and two of the passengers suffered more or less severely. Listening to these narratives from eye-witnesses, and in some instances, I more than suspect, participators, what most perplexed and confounded me was the way in which, in the midst of some episode of lawlessness and sanguinary violence, some trait of fidelity, or act of generosity, would appear

"like a fly in amber." The "servant boy," who would go out at night "in turn" to rob other houses, would quite resolutely defend his own master's residence against his companions; on the ground that it was "not fair" to approach a door entrusted to his care. The house of a Mr. Fawcett, a Protestant gentleman farmer near Cashel, was attacked, of all days in the year, on a Christmas-day. The gentleman himself was away in Dublin; and the place was in charge of his son, aged twenty, and a servant-boy named Gorman. A servant-girl saw a party of men coming up the lawn, and, guessing their errand, she rushed in and gave the alarm. Gorman recognised them well enough. He had been "out" with them many a night on similar work; but now he was in charge of "the master's" property, and he would defend it. He and young Fawcett barricaded the hall door and windows. Some of the assailants got in through the rear of the house, but a cross-door in the hall barred their way to where the guns which they wanted were kept. This they sought to force; Gorman expostulating and threatening to fire. They seem not to have credited this, and persisted, when, finding the door likely to yield, he aimed through a small fan-light

at the top and mortally wounded the chief assailant, a young man named Buckley. The party fled, carrying their disabled leader; but eventually they found that escape was impossible with a wounded man, streaming with blood, in their arms. What were they to do? They hid him in some brushwood near a running stream, telling him on no account to make a noise, and promising that they would return for him at night. He endured great agony from thirst, and his resolution giving way, he cried aloud for water. Some women coming from mass heard the moans, and discovering where he lay, brought him some water in his hat. This done, he implored them to "pass on, and say nothing." They knew what was meant, and silently went their way. When night fell his companions returned with a door on which to bring him home; but as they were fording the Suir at Ballycamus they discovered that it was a corpse they were bearing. He was dead! Deciding not to shock his poor mother by bringing the body to the door, they concealed it in a brake, setting watches to guard it day and night till they could give it suitable interment. By this time of course tidings of the attack on Mr. Fawcett's house had reached the authorities, and

Mr. Wilcox, R.M., and Captain Long, J.P., of Longfield, with a strong party of police, commenced to search from house to house for a wounded man, so as to get a clue to his companions. Gorman, who had shot Buckley, and who knew him well, declared that all the assailants were utter strangers! Buckley's companions made a levy on the associates throughout the barony, and raised £50 for his mother, to whom they broke the news of his fate. When the magistrates asked her where her son was, she said he had gone to seek work near Cahir. Buckley had a grand midnight funeral; but some one "peached"; Captain Long got word of the burial, and next night, at the head of a party of police, came to disinter the body and examine it. Some one, however, peached on the police, too, for an hour before they arrived at the graveyard the coffin had been dug up by Buckley's comrades and carried off to the mountains. It is a positive fact that for two months this chase after the corpse went on; four or five times it was buried, and as often hurriedly disinterred. At length the search had to be given up, and one night Buckley was borne back to his father's grave at Ballyshehan, where he has since lain. The dismal

sequel to this strange story is that Captain Long, for having exerted himself so actively in the endeavour to discover Buckley's associates, was shot dead in his own house some few months subsequently.

"Cut" Quinlan is a name that will long be remembered in Tipperary. Two brothers Quinlan, Michael and "Cut"—the latter a *soubriquet*—lived in the parish of Anacarthy, not far from the Limerick Junction railway station. They held a small farm from a Mr. Black. On the same estate lived four brothers named Hennessy, one of whom filled the dangerous office of "rent-warner" to Mr. Black. The Quinlans were evicted, and they suspected the Hennessys had led Mr. Black to the act—a suspicion strengthened to conviction when the land from which they had been dispossessed was given to the Hennessys. In that hour a frightful purpose took possession of "Cut." It was nothing less than a resolve to pursue to death every one of the Hennessys. The rent-warner, Denis, was shot about three months after the eviction of the Quinlans. Tom Hennessy was waylaid and murdered on the public road from Anacarthy to Graffon. No evidence could be found to connect "Cut" with either crime, though

no one doubted his guilt. Davy Hennessy, seeing that destruction awaited the family, emigrated to America. Here, however, he was encountered and shot dead by the younger Quinlan. What became of the fourth Hennessy I never heard. "Cut" Quinlan now gave himself up to a career of desperation, constituting himself a sort of general avenger against bailiffs, agents, landlords, and all other "oppressors" in the county. A peasant widow in considerable distress had her scanty household goods and farm stock seized for poor-rate. Three keepers who were in charge of the seizure were spending the night in the parlour of the house, when suddenly about midnight the window was dashed in and the bloodthirsty "Cut" sprang into the room. The bailiffs knew they had no mercy to expect, and tried to make for the door. He shot one dead. Another in his terror attempted to escape up the chimney. The murderer pulled him down by the feet and blew out his brains with a pistol-shot. The third by this time had jumped through the window and got out. Quinlan followed, overtook, and shot him. No one survived to tell the bloody tale to judge or jury, and the assassin walked abroad unpunished.

At length "Cut" began to find that popular feeling had been decidedly revolted by his career, and things were getting uncomfortable for him. He disappeared, no one for some time knew whither. Eventually letters reached Anacarthy to say that "Cut" had enlisted in the service of the Queen, and was now in India. Years flew by. Sobraon, Aliwal, and Chillianwallah had stirred the heart of England, and the glory-crowned troops of Great Britain came home to receive a nation's welcome. In their ranks returned "Cut" Quinlan. He had fought through the Sutlej campaign; had distinguished himself as the most daring and courageous, and, incredible as it sounds, one of the best-conducted men in the regiment! He took his discharge from the army, and came back to Tipperary, where it soon became notorious that he was once more the leader in every outrage. One day Father Mullaly, parish priest of Anacarthy, was riding home from a sick call, when he overtook "Cut." "Quinlan," said he, "I heard you conducted yourself well in India. I wish to God you had stayed there, for your own sake and every one else's!"

"Shure, yer reverence, where should one come to but his native place?"

"Ah, Quinlan, the place for one to come to is where he will not revolt God and man with crime."

"Crime! yer reverence! Crime! is it me ——"

"Silence, sir; don't attempt this trifling with me. You know well, Quinlan, the life you've been leading. You have escaped the law for want of evidence, but you won't escape God. *His* justice will not be baulked. Wretched man, you have been in the thick of battle in India. While bullets rained around you God spared you, perhaps to give you yet another chance of repentance. I had hoped when you came home that I should see you a reformed man. I am your pastor; God will require of me an account of your soul, will ask what efforts I have made to bring you to the paths of virtue. Oh, wretched man! I implore of you, by the merciful God whose forbearance you are outraging, give up your course of crime. Come to the tribunal of penance, and by hearty sorrow and honest life endeavour to repair the scandal you have given."

During the delivery of this appeal "Cut" looked on every side to see if he could escape by a run; but he knew Father Mullaly well; and furthermore he knew Father Mullaly's cob could take fence and

dyke like a greyhound. He could not fly, and had to listen.

"Well, Quinlan, will you make up your mind to come to confession, in the name of God?"

"Well, yer reverence, shure 'tis you that can spake hard to a boy, only I know you mane it for good."

"But will you come? Answer me, sir."

"Oh!—will I, is it? Well, do ye see, sir—of course 'tis right I should go to my duty."

"But will you promise?"

There was a long pause.

"I will, yer reverence."

"But when? next Saturday?"

"Ah, now, Father Mullaly, you're coming too hard on me entirely. There are raysons why I can't go."

"Reasons why you can't become reconciled with Almighty God, by repenting your past crimes and resolving to amend in the future?"

"Well now, yer reverence, the fact of it is there's a thief of a Scotchman beyant there that I——"

"What, sir—what! You don't mean to tell me to my face that you meditate more crime——"

"Oh no, yer reverence; I only mane I'm not

able yet to say I forgive these infernal Scotchmen who come over here taking ten or twenty farms from honest people; begor, taking a whole country-side for a sheep-walk, and the people turned out to die. No, Father Mullaly, I won't go to confession, for I can't say 'tis a sin I'd be sorry for to shoot a Scotchman."

The parish priest, undaunted, returned to the attack, and pressed "Cut" so hard that at length he promised faithfully he would come to confession and "make his peace with God" on Saturday.

On that day Father Mullaly, sitting in his confessional, saw "Cut" enter the chapel and kneel on the floor in a secluded spot. The priest waited and waited, till two hours flew by. He could see Quinlan in fervent prayer, beating his breast, and actually wetting the floor with his tears. But he made no sign towards approaching the confessional. At length Father Mullaly had to come away, leaving Quinlan still bowed on the floor. A fortnight later they met once more, and the parish priest was beginning to reproach "Cut," when the latter exclaimed, "Say nothing to me to-day, yer reverence. I'm going on Monday." Monday came, and the former scene was repeated

with like result. Quinlan prayed for hours, but avoided the confession. Nearly two months elapsed before his reverence was able to catch sight of "Cut," who, in fact, was avoiding him. At last they accidentally encountered. "Cut," said the priest, "I ask you no more. Go now your path of crime. I have done my best, and I leave you to God. You are a coward and a liar."

Quinlan jumped with a spasm of passion, and his eyes flashed fire. Curbing himself, however, he said, "No, no, Father Mullaly; no. You never were more wrong in your life. I am neither a coward nor a liar, but I know that I'd be bound in confession to give up shooting bad landlords, and that I never will; so good-bye."

Father Mullaly saw "Cut" no more. But as long as the fox runs he is trapped at last. Quinlan was caught almost red-handed in a murderous attack, and was tried for it at Clonmel assizes. He wrote to Chatham, where his former regiment was now stationed, and told a piteous tale of innocence to his captain, beseeching him by the memory of certain past services to come over to Clonmel and "speak for him" in court. According to my informants, who were, I believe, present on

the occasion when the trial came on, "Cut" paid little attention to the proceedings, but from time to time swept the audience with anxious eye. As the case was concluding Quinlan's former captain hurriedly entered and took a seat in the grand jury box. "My lord," said the prisoner, "I have one witness. Hear his story, and say am I likely to be the man whom these other people think they can identify as a murderer." The officer was sworn, and told of "Cut" what I have already mentioned: his exemplary conduct, his steadiness, his undaunted bravery. "Most of the time he was my own servant," he continued, "and a truer soldier never lived. My lord, I owe my life to his fidelity and heroism. On the day of Sobraon, when shot and shell flew like hail, I fell amidst a heap of our brave fellows torn by the enemy's fire. When no man of ordinary courage would face that storm of death, this faithful fellow rushed in, careless of his life, found me where I lay, and bore me in his arms from the field. Thank God I am here to-day, I hope to save his life. He would be incapable of the crime laid to his charge."

Alas for the inconsistencies of human nature—of Tipperary human nature, at all events. The jury

knew "Cut" better and longer than the captain did. The evidence satisfied them of his guilt, and they were otherwise aware of his desperate career. They found him guilty of manslaughter, and he was transported for life beyond the seas!

Here, surely, was a strange amalgam. Up to the day of his eviction this man had lived the ordinary uneventful life of a peasant. From that hour forth he seemed, like the character in Sue's story, to "see blood." He would dare almost inevitable death to save his English master. He would refuse every entreaty of his religious pastor and life-time friend imploring him to turn from a course of merciless vengeance and revolting crime.

It must be said that thirty or forty years ago the administration of justice in these cases partook very often of the rough and ready style. The evil idea of "striking terror," and the practice of relying too largely on the evidence of "approvers" —often perjured villains who had been themselves the real criminals—led betimes to the worst results. One cannot spend a night amidst the fireside group in a Tipperary farmhouse, as I have frequently done, without hearing stories of men hanged for

offences of which they were wholly innocent; the identification being stupidly wrong; the peasantry will tell you it was wilfully false. I was inclined to think there might be some proclivity to such an impression on the part of the population; but I am bound to say evidence irrefragable convinced me that justice blundered sadly in some of those displays of precipitancy and passion, miscalled salutary vigour.

Agrarian crime has not totally disappeared. Evils so deep-rooted are not soon or easily expelled. Ever and anon even still we are startled and horrified by some incident reminding us of gloomy days we had fondly hoped were gone for ever. But a thousand signs proclaim that though in Ireland, as in England, and in every country, crime in various shapes will last, in some degree, as long as human passion, yet agrarian outrages, as we used to know them formerly—ghastly campaigns in a sort of civil war—will soon belong entirely to the past of Irish history. How the system which produced them received its death-blow is a story that will come in its proper place. But it is the sad fact that thirty years ago Ireland passed through some of the most terrible episodes of that dismal struggle.

Two things astonish most persons who, from a distance, contemplate agrarian crime in Ireland. The first is the negative or positive sympathy on the part of the rural population that appears to surround the criminals; or, at all events, the absence of any co-operation with the law in its pursuit of them. The second is a fact I have glanced at in the case of Tipperary, namely, that a district the scene of such violence is, at other intervals and in other respects, peaceable, orderly, and law-abiding. In the course of many years' observation, I satisfied myself those outrages—I do not speak of isolated acts of agrarian crime, but of those tempests that, for a time, raged in particular districts—had a sort of class history; certain features or characteristics; certain originating causes that might be discerned more or less in all of them. Not in every particular case certainly, but in most of them, study reveals something like this movement in a vicious circle:

A district formerly disturbed has been peaceable for some time. Landlord and tenant have got along very fairly in a sort of truce, armed or unarmed, negatively hostile or positively friendly. After a while some agent less considerate than those around him conceives an "improvement,"

an increase of rent, a few new "rules of the estate," a batch of evictions on the title. In the general quietude the thing may be done without much noise or resistance, and he succeeds. His example is followed and extended. Other agents or landlords go on pushing to its utmost limits technical legal right as opposed to actual equity. Some one, more reckless than all the rest, leads the way. He intimates that *he* knows how to deal with these people. "Firmness," he says, will do it all, and he ostentatiously carries revolvers in his coat pocket. A sullen, gloomy calm, which every one accustomed to Irish life well knows to be the herald of a storm, seems to assure him of immunity. He is fired at, but happily escapes. Now, he "must make an example." He will not be cowed by would-be assassins. Out the threatened tenants must go. One day the news flashes through the country that this gentleman has been shot dead under circumstances of great brutality. A shudder of horror goes through one section of the community. A shout of joy or a muttered exclamation of approval* is sent forth by another.

* A near relative of a young friend of mine owns a shop for the sale of general merchandise in a large town in the county Mayo. One market-day the shop was unusually full of country

One portion of the press devotes itself to invectives against the murderers and their sympathisers; another to denunciations of the conduct on the victim's part out of which this tragedy arose. Every threatened tenant in the locality and throughout the country sees in the assassin an avenger. The blow he has struck is a deterrent that will save hundreds. The police are refused all assistance in efforts to capture him; and, sheltered by the people, he escapes.

It is at this point all the harm, all the woful moral rot and social disruption, commences. It is just here all the mischief which arises from an antithesis of law and justice sets in. Emboldened by the escape of this assassin, or encouraged by the sympathy manifested for his guilty deed, some wretch with far less cause of complaint than he had, and who but for this example murder would

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people, when suddenly some strange stir was noticed among them. Every man in the throng was observed, one by one, to lift his hat, and heard to ejaculate in a low voice, quite reverentially, "Glory be to God!" "What has happened—what are you all praying for?" said the proprietress to one of them. "Oh! glory be to God, ma'am, did you not hear the news?" he replied; "the greatest tyrant in the county Mayo was shot this morning!"

have shrunk from such an act, now strikes at some other life. Another and another follow, on slighter and slighter provocation, as the moral atmosphere becomes more and more tainted by what has gone before, until, eventually, every cowardly miscreant who has a personal grudge to satiate swells the list of atrocities; and crimes are multiplied which disgust and affright even those who hailed the first shot with a fatal approval. At length the hangman's work is found to be in accord with the popular conscience. The landlords and agents have fought the fight of their class unflinchingly; but they heartily wish the storm had never been raised. The farmers contend that the first case was one of frightful provocation, but agree that the thing has led to bad work all round. Both sides now have had enough of it. The shootings and the hangings die out, and for another period of years there is peace and tranquillity in the district.

I have seen all this, again and again, pass before my eyes. Of course the programme was not, in every particular, the same in every case; occasionally a murder for which the human mind could conceive no palliation began the accursed business; but in what may be called the more

serious outbursts of agrarian violence, the general course of the dismal story was very much as I have described it. As a rule, the first tragedy was one which had some terrible provocation behind it. As a rule, the later outrages were the very wantonness of ruffianism and crime.

I know of no Irish topic on which candid truthful and independent writing and speaking are more rare than this of agrarian crime. The outrages in many cases were so fearful that no one durst speak a word as to their having had some cause, without exposing himself to a charge of palliating or sympathising with them. On the other hand, the provocation often was so monstrous that if one execrated the crime as it deserved to be, he was supposed to be callously indifferent to the avidity, the greed, the heartlessness that led up to it. Thus, thirty years ago, nay, twenty years ago, or less, the creation of a healthy public opinion on the subject was impossible. We stood arrayed, one and all of us, in one or other of two hostile camps: that of the landlords, in apparent approval of merciless evictions; or that of the tenants, in apparent sympathy with red-handed murder. Yet, occasionally on both sides there must have been many a good man, many a true

patriot, who in his secret heart bewailed the terrible state of things that thus convulsed and affrighted society; and who yearned for the day when the page of Ireland's story would be blotted no more by this Crimson Stain.

CHAPTER XI.

"LOCHABER NO MORE!"

A HIGHLAND friend whose people were swept away by the great "Sutherland Clearances," describing to me some of the scenes in that great dispersion, often dwelt with emotion on the spectacle of the evicted clansmen marching through the glens on their way to exile, their pipers playing, as a last farewell, "Lochaber no more!"

> **Lochaber no more! Lochaber no more!**
> **We'll maybe return to Lochaber no more!**

I sympathised with his story; I shared all his feelings. I had seen my own countrymen march in like sorrowful procession on their way to the emigrant ship. Not alone in one district, however, but all over the island, were such scenes to be witnessed in Ireland from 1847 to 1857. Within that decade of years nearly a million of

people were "cleared" off the island by eviction and emigration.

A bitter memory is held in Ireland of the "Famine Clearances," as they are called. There was much in them that was heartless and deplorable; much also that was unfortunately unavoidable. Three years of dreadful privation had annihilated the resources of the agricultural population. In 1848, throughout whole districts, the tenant-farmers—the weak and wasted few who survived hunger and plague—were without means to till the soil. The exhaustion of the tenant class involved, in numerous cases, the ruin of the landlords. A tenantry unable to crop the land were of course unable to pay a rent. Many of them, so far from being in a position to pay, rather required the landlord's assistance to enable them to live.

Apart from all question as to the disposition of the Irish landlords to yield such aid, it is the indubitable fact that, as a class, they were utterly unable to afford it. Some of them nearly extinguished their own interest in their estates by borrowing money in 1848, 1849, and 1850, to pull the tenants through.

Too many of the Irish landlords acted differently; and for the course they adopted they were not the

only persons to blame. The English press at this juncture embraced the idea that the Irish Famine, if properly availed of, would prove a great blessing. Providence, it was declared, had sent this valuable opportunity for settling the vexed question of Irish misery and discontent. Nothing could have been done with the wretched population that had hitherto squatted on the land. They were too poor to expend any capital in developing the resources of the soil. They were too ignorant to farm it scientifically. Besides, they were too numerous. Why incur ruinous expense to save or continue a class of land-holders so undesirable and injurious? Rather behold in what has happened an indication of the design of Providence. Ireland needs to be colonised with thrifty Scotch and scientific English farmers; men with means; men with modern ideas.

Thus pleaded and urged a thousand voices on the English shore; and to impecunious Irish landlords the suggestion seemed a heavenly revelation. English tenants paid higher rents than Irish, and paid them punctually. English "colonists" would so farm the land as to increase its worth fourfold. English farmers had a proper idea of land-tenure, and would quit their holdings on demand. No

more worry with half-pauperised and discontented fellows always behind with their rent, always wanting a reduction, and never willing to pay an increase! No more annoyance from tenant-right agitators and seditious newspapers; no more dread of Ribbonite mandates and Rockite warnings! Blessed hour! El Dorado was in sight!

To men circumstanced as the Irish landlords were in 1848, these allurements were sure to prove irresistible. They formed the theme and substance of essay, speech, and lecture in England at the time. Some writers put the matter a little kindly for the Irish, and regretted that the regeneration of the country had to be accomplished at a price so painful. Others, unhappily, made no secret of their joy and exultation. Here was the opportunity to make an end of the Irish difficulty. The famine had providentially cleared the way for a great and grand work, if England was but equal to the occasion. Now was the time to plant Ireland with a British population.

One now can afford to doubt that the men who spoke and wrote in this way ever weighed the effect and consequences of such language on a people like the Irish. I recall it in a purely historical spirit, to identify it as the first visible origin and

cause of a state of things which disagreeably challenges English attention; the desperate bitterness, the deadly hatred of England, which the emigrant thousands carried with them from Ireland to America. To many an Englishman that hostile spirit must seem almost inexplicable. "If Irishmen have had to emigrate," they say, "it was for their own good and advantage; why should they hate England for that? Englishmen also emigrate in thousands every day." There is no need to dwell upon the painful circumstances that distinguish the Irish exodus from the adventurous emigration of Germans or Swedes or Englishmen. The Irishman who comes to tell the story of these famine-evictions, and the emigration-panic which followed, finds himself, in truth, face to face with the origin of Irish-American Fenianism.

It may be that, even if the tempting idea of "colonisation" had never affected their minds, a certain section of the Irish landlords would have had to pursue, in a greater or less degree, the course they followed. What were they to do? Penniless lords of penniless tenants, it seemed a miserable necessity that they should sacrifice the latter; as one drowning man drives another from a plank insufficient to support them both. Be this

as it may, in the track of the Irish Famine came such wholesale "clearances" as never had been known in the history of land-tenure. Of course no rents had been paid—because none could be paid—by a great part of the Irish tenantry during the famine years, and the holdings were technically forfeit to the landlord for "non-payment of rent." At a later stage, even in cases where no rent was due, evictions were carried out all the same, to "clear" the land, and change the farms to sheep-walks and bullock-ranges. The quarter-session courts now presented a strange spectacle. The business of these tribunals swelled to enormous dimensions, from two classes of cases, actions against farmers for meal, seed-corn, and cash lent, and ejectment processes. I have seen the latter literally in piles or sheaves on the desk before the clerk, and listened for hours to the dull monotony of "calling" and "marking" the cases. No defences were attempted; none could be maintained.

Then came the really painful stage of the proceedings—the evictions.

With the English farmer, as a rule, the termination of his tenancy is, I believe, little more inconvenient or distressing than the ordinary

"Michaelmas flitting" of a town resident from one house to another. He has hired the use of a farm with all its appurtenances, fixtures, and conveniences, furnished in good order by the landlord, just as one might engage a fishing-boat by the week or by the day, or rent a shooting, with cosy box or mountain lodge, for a season. Very far different is the case with the Irish tenant. As a rule, his farm has been to him and his forefathers for generations a fixed and cherished home. Every bush and brake, every shrub and tree, every meadow-path or grassy knoll, has some association for him which is, as it were, a part of his existence. Whatever there is on or above the surface of the earth in the shape of house or office or steading, of fence or road, or gate or stile, has been created by the tenant's hand. Under this humble thatch roof he first drew breath, and has grown to manhood. Hither he brought the fair young girl he won as wife. Here have his little children been born. This farm-plot is his whole dominion, his world, his all; he is verily a part of it, like the ash or the oak that has sprung from its soil. Removal in his case is a tearing up by the roots, where transplantation is death. The attachment of the Irish peasant to

his farm is something almost impossible to be comprehended by those who have not spent their lives amongst the class, and seen from day to day the depth and force and intensity of these home feelings.

An Irish eviction, therefore, it may well be supposed, is a scene to try the sternest nature. I know sheriffs and sub-sheriffs who have protested to me that odious and distressing as were the duties they had to perform at an execution on the public scaffold, far more painful to their feelings were those which fell to their lot in carrying out an eviction, where, as in the case of these "clearances," the houses had to be levelled. The anger of the elements affords no warrant for respite or reprieve. In hail or thunder, rain or snow, out the inmate must go. The bed-ridden grandsire, the infant in the cradle, the sick, the aged, and the dying, must alike be thrust forth, though other roof or home the world has naught for them, and the stormy sky must be their canopy during the night at hand. This is no fancy picture. It is but a brief and simple outline sketch of realities witnessed all over Ireland in the ten years that followed the famine. I recall the words of an eye-witness, describing one of these scenes:

"Seven hundred human beings," says the Most Rev. Dr. Nulty, Catholic Bishop of Meath, "were driven from their homes on this one day. There was not a shilling of rent due on the estate at the time, except by one man. The sheriffs' assistants employed on the occasion to extinguish the hearths and demolish the homes of those honest, industrious men worked away with a will at their awful calling until evening fell. At length an incident occurred that varied the monotony of the grim and ghastly ruin which they were spreading all around. They stopped suddenly and recoiled, panic-stricken with terror, from two dwellings which they were directed to destroy with the rest. They had just learned that typhus fever held these houses in its grasp, and had already brought death to some of their inmates. They therefore supplicated the agent to spare these houses a little longer; but he was inexorable, and insisted that they should come down. He ordered a large winnowing-sheet to be secured over the beds in which the fever-victims lay — fortunately they happened to be delirious at the time—and then directed the houses to be unroofed cautiously and slowly. I administered the last sacrament of the Church to four of these fever-victims next day, and

save the above-mentioned winnowing-sheet, there was not then a roof nearer to me than the canopy of heaven. The scene of that eviction day I must remember all my life long. The wailing of women, the screams, the terror, the consternation of children, the speechless agony of men, wrung tears of grief from all who saw them. I saw the officers and men of a large police force who were obliged to attend on the occasion cry like children. The heavy rains that usually attend the autumnal equinoxes descended in cold copious torrents throughout the night, and at once revealed to the houseless sufferers the awful realities of their condition. I visited them next morning, and rode from place to place administering to them all the comfort and consolation I could. The landed proprietors in a circle all round, and for many miles in every direction, warned their tenantry against admitting them to even a single night's shelter. Many of these poor people were unable to emigrate. After battling in vain with privation and pestilence, they at last graduated from the workhouse to the tomb, and in little more than three years nearly a fourth of them lay quietly in their graves."

To such an extent was this demolition of houses

carried,* that a certain kind of skill was acquired in the work; and gangs of men accustomed so to wield pick and crowbar became a special feature for the time in the labour market. After a while the whole *posse*—sheriff, sub-sheriff, agent, bailiffs, and attendant policemen—came to be designated the "Crowbar Brigade," a name of evil memory, at mention of which to this day many a peasant's heart will chill in Ireland.

Soon, indeed, hand-labour became too slow in the work of house-levelling, and accordingly scientific improvement and mechanical ingenuity were called in. To Mr. Scully, a Catholic landlord in Tipperary, belongs the credit of inventing a machine for the cheaper and more expeditious unroofing and demolishing of tenants' homes. I never saw it myself, but friends who watched the invention in operation described it to me. It consisted of massive iron levers, hooks, and chains, to which horses were yoked. By deftly fixing the hooks and levers at the proper points of the rafters, at one crack of the whip and pull of

* On the 22nd of March 1848, Mr. Poulett Scrope, M.P., in the House of Commons, called attention to the grossly illegal way in which this wholesale levelling of tenants' houses was being carried out in Ireland; the evictions being, he stated, "mostly at nightfall!"

the horses the roof was brought away. By some similarly skilful gripping of coign-stones, the house-walls were torn to pieces. It was found that two of these machines enabled a sheriff to evict ten times as many peasant families in a day as could be got through by a crowbar brigade of fifty men. Mr. Scully took no special advantage of his invention. He neither registered it nor patented it, but gave it freely for the general good of his fellow-landlords. I am told that not a dozen years ago it was seen in full swing in a southern county.

But even in ruin and desolation, "home"—the home that was—seemed to have a fascination for the evicted people. They lingered long about the spot, until driven away by force, or compelled by sheer starvation to wander off into the "wide, wide world." They threw up rude tents or "sheelings" by the roadside—branches of trees or bits of plank snatched from the *débris* of the levelled houses being laid against the hedge or fence, and covered with pieces of old sheets or with fern-leaves and grass sods. In such poor shelter the children and the women crouched; the men slept under the sky. A friend told me that driving through Clare county in '49 he passed

several encampments of evicted tenants thus established on the roadside. He said there must have been hundreds of men, women, and children in all, and that they seemed to have been in these huts for some time. In the county Mayo these wayside camps were nearly as numerous as in Clare; but in the former county, in a few instances at least, neighbouring properties eventually afforded a foothold to the poor outcasts, and saved them from the workhouse. It is only just to mention that harsh and heartless as the fact mentioned by Dr. Nulty must sound (the mandate of the surrounding landlords forbidding their tenants to house or shelter the evicted ones), it had, if not in that particular case, in others, this explanation behind it—viz., that where holdings were already small enough there was no room for sub-dividing; and no landlord wished to have the ruined and pauperised population of other townlands fastened as a possible poor-law burden on his own.

The instances were not numerous in which any such asylum was allowed, and the vast multitude —for such they were in the aggregate—gradually separated into two classes. All who were able to emigrate—that is to say, all who either possessed,

or were able to borrow or beg, the necessary means —found their way to Australia, America, or Great Britain. Those who could not command even the few pounds that the passage to England would cost, made for the nearest town, where for awhile they eked out a miserable existence as day-labourers, soon sunk to mendicancy, and eventually disappeared into the workhouse, never to lift their heads or own a home again. The departure of an emigrant cavalcade was a saddening sight. English travellers on Irish railways have sometimes been startled as the train entered a provincial station to hear a loud wail burst from a dense throng on the platform. While the porters with desperate haste are trundling into the luggage-van numerous painted deal boxes, a wild scene of leave-taking is proceeding. It is an emigrant farewell. The emigrants, weeping bitterly, kiss, over and over, every neighbour and friend, man, woman, and child, who has come to see them for the last time. But the keen pang is where some member of the family is departing, leaving the rest to be sent for by him or her out of the first earnings in exile. The husband goes, trusting the wife and little ones to some relative or friend, till he can pay their passage out from the other

side. Or it is a son or daughter who parts from the old father and mother, and tells them they shall not long be left behind. A deafening wail resounds as the station bell gives the signal of starting. I have seen grey-haired peasants so clutch and cling to the departing child at this last moment that only the utmost force of three or four friends could tear them asunder. The porters have to use some violence before the train moves off, the crowd so presses against door and window. When at length it moves away, amidst a scene of passionate grief, hundreds run along the fields beside the line to catch yet another glimpse of the friends they shall see no more.*

Besides or between the landlords who at every sacrifice sustained and retained their tenantry, and those who, by choice or necessity, abandoned them

* At Cahirmore, some six miles west of Castletown Bearhaven, one day in June 1847 I was walking along the fields that reach the cliff on the Atlantic shore, when I saw, running along the path that skirts the edge, a young peasant, sobbing, and waving his cap to a ship in full sail a mile off the land. For awhile I was utterly at a loss to understand what it meant; but on inquiry I found this was an emigrant ship that had just sailed from Castletown, and his sister was on board. The breeze was light, and the vessel made little way; and the poor fellow had run along the shore for miles to wave a farewell, on chance that his sister might be gazing towards home!

to their fate or flung them on the world, there was a third class, who adopted a middle course. They did not help the tenantry to weather the storm and live on in the old places, but they assisted them in going away—gave them enough money to pay the passage fare to the American or English shore. The character and merits of this transaction were very mixed. In some cases it was generous conduct; in others it was a hard bargain, struck in the hour of the tenant's helplessness. Which feeling preponderated—whether the landlord blessed his good fortune when, for so small a price, he got rid of ruined tenants and probable poor-rate burden on his estate, and had free possession of cleared farms besides, or whether he was a man who honestly and sincerely felt that he was doing the best for them and for himself—that they could never pull through at home, and might do well in Australia or America—is a question I have never yet been able to determine to my own satisfaction. Some landlords, no doubt, were swayed by one class of consideration, some by the other. But with every desire to take the brightest view of this "assisted emigration" proceeding, and to presume the best as to motives, I could see that hardly any of these landlords enabled the

pauperised fugitives to do more than reach the foreign shore. Not one of them seemed to consider for a moment how the English people would like to have tens of thousands of rude, unsophisticated, unskilled, unlettered Irish peasants flung penniless on the quays of Liverpool or the dock-sides of London. Not one of them seemed to care what might be the result if the hundreds of thousands who streamed across the Atlantic should fail to find employment the day they landed at Boston or New York. Hundreds of these Irish emigrants crossed the Atlantic with barely the tattered clothes on their back, and without a shilling to purchase even one day's food on landing. I know of my own knowledge that several borrowed the seven shillings and sixpence that took them as deck passengers across the Channel to England, trusting to the hazard of getting something to do the day, nay, the hour, they landed at Bristol, London, or Liverpool, if they were not to go without bed or food their first night on English soil.

"Thanks be to God, they have fired in the air!" says the Cork waiter to the English visitor in one of Lever's stories. Two Irish gentlemen having quarrelled in the hotel coffee-room, a duel

with pistols was arranged to come off on the spot there and then. To the delight of their friends, however, and of the assembled waiters, napkin on arm, they "fired in the air," that is, through the ceiling, and nearly shot the Englishman in "No. 10" overhead. Very like this "firing in the air" was the conduct of the Irish landlords who sent off their pauperised tenantry and cottiers to England and America. "Thanks be to God, they are gone!" was, no doubt, the happy reflection of many a benevolent landlord at that time. But gone whither, and to what fate? Gone from possibly burdening or inconveniencing *him*; but what of the possible burden and inconvenience to the social systems into which this mass of strange material was thus flung?

Often as I stood and watched these departing groups I tried to think what it might be that they could do in "the land they were going to." What were they fitted for? Many of them had never seen a town of ten thousand inhabitants; and in a large city, even in their own country, they would be helpless and bewildered as a flock of sheep on a busy highway. What was before them in the midst of London or New York? What impressions would they create in the minds

of a strange city people? What species of skill, what branch of industry, did they bring with them, to command employment and insure a welcome? Few of them could read; some of them, accustomed to speak the native Gaelic, knew little of the English tongue. Their rustic manners would expose them to derision, their want of education to contempt, on the part of those who would not know, or pause to consider, that in the hapless land they left the schoolmaster had been proscribed by law for two hundred years. Wofully were they handicapped. Nearly everything was against them. Their past ways of life, so far from training them in aught for these new circumstances, in nearly every way unfitted them for the change.

I speak in all this of the peasant or cottier emigrants. Mingling in the vast throng went thousands, no doubt, who, happily for them as it afterwards proved, possessed education, skill, and occasionally moderate means for a start in life on the other side; members of respectable and once prosperous families that had been ruined in the famine time. Nay, there sailed in the steerage of the emigrant ships many a fair young girl, going to face a servant's lot in a foreign land, who at

home had once had servants to attend her every want; and many a fine young fellow ready to engage as groom who learnt that business, so to speak, as a gentleman's son in the hunting-field. In the cities and towns of Great Britain and America there are to-day hundreds of Irishmen, some having risen to position and fortune, others still toiling on in some humble sphere, who landed on the new shore friendless and forlorn, from the wreck of happy and affluent homes.

But as to the vast bulk of uncultured peasants, victims of this wholesale expulsion, their fate was and could but be deplorable. Landing in such masses, everything around them so strange, so new, and sometimes so hostile, they inevitably herded together, making a distinct colony or "quarter" in the city where they settled. Destitute as they were, their necessities drove them to the lowest and most squalid lanes and alleys of the big towns. At home in their native valleys poverty was free from horrors that mingled with it here, namely, contact with debasing city crime. The children of these wretched emigrants grew up amidst terrible contaminations. The police-court records soon began to show an array of Celtic

patronymics. "The low Irish" grew to be a phrase of scorn in the community around them; and they, repaying scorn with hatred, became, as it were, the Arabs of the place, "their hand against every man's hand, and every man's hand against them."

This dismal picture, painfully true of many a case quarter of a century ago, is now happily rare. A brighter and better state of things is rapidly making its appearance. But, for my own part, I can never forget the mournful impressions made upon me more than twenty years ago when investigating the condition of the labouring Irish in Staffordshire and in Lancashire, in Boston and in New York. I knew that these poor countrymen of mine were of better and nobler material than the strangers around them imagined; that they were the victims of circumstances. I saw and I deplored their vices and their failings; saw that their native Irish virtues, their simple, kindly, generous nature, had almost totally disappeared in the cruel transplantation.

The Irish exodus had one awful concomitant, which, in the Irish memory of that time, fills nearly as large a space as the famine itself. The people, flying from fever-tainted hovel and work-

house, carried the plague with them on board. Each vessel became a floating charnel-house. Day by day the American public was thrilled by the ghastly tale of ships arriving off the harbours reeking with typhus and cholera; the track they had followed across the ocean strewn with the corpses flung overboard on the way. Speaking in the House of Commons on the 11th of February 1848, Mr. Labouchere referred to one year's havoc on board the ships sailing to Canada and New Brunswick alone in the following words:—

"Out of 106,000 emigrants who during the last twelve months crossed the Atlantic for Canada and New Brunswick, 6100 perished on the voyage, 4100 on their arrival, 5200 in the hospitals, and 1900 in the towns to which they repaired. The total mortality was no less than 17 per cent. of the total number emigrating to those places; the number of deaths being 17,300."

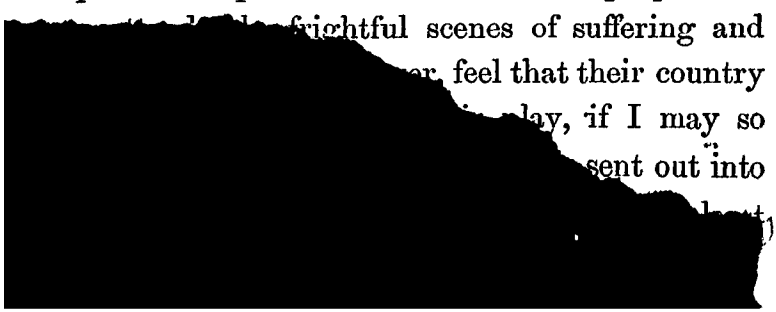
In all the great ports of America and Canada huge quarantine hospitals had to be hastily erected. Into these every day newly arriving plague-ships poured what survived of their human freight, for whom room was as rapidly made in those wards by the havoc of death. Whole families disappeared between land and land, as sailors say. Frequently

the adults were swept away, the children alone surviving. It was impossible in every case to ascertain the names of the sufferers, and often all clue to identification was lost. The public authorities, or the nobly humane organisations that had established those lazar-houses, found themselves towards the close of their labours in charge of hundreds of orphan children, of whom name and parentage alike were now impossible to be traced. About eight years ago I was waited upon in Dublin by one of these waifs, now a man of considerable wealth and honourable position. He had come across the Atlantic in pursuit of a purpose to which he is devoting years of his life—an endeavour to obtain some clue to his family, who perished in one of the great shore hospitals in 1849. Piously he treasures a few pieces of a red-painted emigrant box, which he believes belonged to his father. Eagerly he travels from place to place in Clare and Kerr[illegible] see if he may dig fro[illegible] past the secret l[illegible]

"From G[illegible]

nificent river; upon the shores of Lakes Ontario and Erie—wherever the tide of emigration has extended, are to be found the final resting-places of the sons and daughters of Erin; one unbroken chain of graves, where repose fathers and mothers, sisters and brothers, in one commingled heap, without a tear bedewing the soil or a stone marking the spot. Twenty thousand and upwards have thus gone down to their graves."

I do not know that the history of our time has a parallel for this Irish exodus. The Germans, to be sure, have emigrated in vast numbers; and, like the Irish, seem to form distinct communities where they settle. But many circumstances distinguish the Irish case from any that can be recalled. Other emigrations were, more or less, the gradual and steady overflow of a population cheerfully willing to go. This was the forcible expulsion or panic rush of a stricken people, and



high ideas of Ireland and the Irish. At this present hour there are English men and women who think all Irishmen wear "caubeens," with pipes stuck in the rim, and carry a reaping-hook under their flannel vest. If only the corresponding class of the English nation, when it had a peasant class, were seen by foreign peoples, as rude a conception might be formed of the typical Englishman.

Yet, the first terrible ordeal over, the Irish emigration is beginning to bear some good and useful fruit. Disadvantageous as was their start in the race, the expatriated Celts are decidedly pulling up, and are striding well to the front in many a land. They are acquiring skill, are turning to good account their naturally quick intelligence. In some places, unfortunately, the vices engendered of ignorance and poverty still drag them down and keep them low; but in most instances they have conquered the respect and secured the kindly regard of their employers, neighbours, and fellow-workmen. The sad circumstances under which the great body of them crossed the seas have indelibly stamped one remarkable characteristic on the Irish emigrants: they are a distinct people. Like the children of Israel, "by

the waters of Babylon they sit down and weep when they remember Sion." In joy or sorrow, in adversity or prosperity, they always have a corner in their hearts for Ireland; a secretly treasured memory of that railway parting-scene, or of the last fond look they turned on the native valley, the ruined cottage, the lonely hawthorn-tree. Often in their dreams they clasp again the hands they wrung that day, ere they set forth for an eternal exile, to behold "Lochaber no more!"

CHAPTER XII.

THE ENCUMBERED ESTATES ACT.

"KINGSTON, Kingston, you black-whiskered, good-natured fellow, I am happy to see you in this friendly country." Such was the characteristic salutation that broke from George IV. as he stepped on the Irish shore at Howth on the 12th of August 1821, and recognised amongst the crowd assembled to greet him the frank, genial, and warm-hearted Earl of Kingston.

The king little thought that day that the "black-whiskered, good-natured" nobleman who stood before him—splendid type of an Irish country gentleman, brave, generous, hospitable, kindly to his tenantry, beloved by his dependants—was fated to be the last of his name and race who would tread in pride the ancestral halls of Mitchelstown. Yet so it was to be. His next heir was to see the ruin of that noble house, the wreck

of that princely fortune, once the boast of southern Ireland.

The traveller from Cork to Dublin, as he nears the Limerick Junction, sees on his right hand, rising boldly from a fertile plain, a chain of lofty mountains. Even when viewed from the railway, one can notice that they are pierced by many a deep gorge and picturesque glen. These are the Galtees, one of the noblest mountain groups in Ireland—perhaps in Europe.

The district has an eventful history. Its deep fastnesses, its trackless hills, its winding defiles, made it the refuge of the native Irish when vanquished on the plains. "A natural fortress of liberty," one of our historians calls it. The Desmond Geraldines—*ipsis Hibernicis Hiberniores*—were its lords throughout the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. The crumbling walls of their numerous castle strongholds still form notable features in the landscape for miles around. Early in the seventeenth century the extensive possessions of this branch of the Fitzgeralds passed to the Fentons of Mitchelstown, one of whom married the daughter of "The White Knight," Fitzgerald of Clongibbon. Very little later on the sole heiress of the Fentons married John King, whose

grandfather, Sir John King, had obtained from Charles II. considerable estates in the county Roscommon. He was the ancestor of the "black-whiskered, good-natured" Lord Kingston, and of Captain E. R. King Harman, M.P. for Sligo (1877), to whom these Roscommon estates have descended.

South and west of the Galtees rise the mountains of Knockmeldoun. The valley between is one of the loveliest in all Munster. At its head stands Mitchelstown Castle. From my boyhood I had heard of the magnificence of this mountain palace of the Kingston family, and of the natural beauties surrounding. But when I visited the place in 1860 the events I am about to narrate had befallen, and their princely home knew the Kingstons no more. A writer in the *Daily News*, nearly ten years previously, had drawn a picture of the scene full of feeling and fidelity, some portion of which I shall reproduce in preference to any sketch of my own. "From afar off," he says, "as soon as the traveller enters the beautiful valley which bears its name, the towers and battlements of Mitchelstown are distinguished, rising above the surrounding woods, and affording an idea of magnificence quite uncommon to this

country. With a liberality very uncommon in Great Britain, the gates are at all hours open to the public. It is said that nothing delighted Lord Kingston so much as to see people enjoying themselves in his demesne. In England the passage of a vehicle through a park would be considered by most proprietors an annoying and unwelcome intrusion. At Mitchelstown Lord Kingston would scarcely permit a carriage to enter without rushing out to greet its occupants, and to invite them to make a survey of his castle and its grounds.

"In harmony with the feelings of the noble owner, the drive from the lodge gates to the entrance portal of the castle is a short and pleasant one. No long and chilling avenue affords the visitor time for preparation. A lawn and pleasure-ground are passed, and the castle stands before you in all its princely grandeur. It consists of a pile of castellated buildings, extensive and elegantly proportioned, and built of stone of the purest white, quarried from the hills on the estate. Nothing can be more simple in arrangement than the interior of this castle. A noble flight of steps leads from the entrance door into a gallery 150 feet in length. At the other end of

this gallery a corresponding flight of marble stairs leads to the upper chambers. The gallery is lighted by ranges of oriel and other windows to the north. On the south are fireplaces of Italian marble, with stoves of knightly character and blazon, designed expressly for the castle. Between these fireplaces are doors, which open into the suite of rooms which form the saloons of reception. Overhead are two ranges of bedchambers, sixty principal and twenty inferior bedrooms. On an emergency as many as a hundred persons have, without difficulty, been accommodated with chambers in the mansion. Concealed by a shrubbery, to the south of the building, are the exterior offices. The stables of the Douglas, made famous by Sir Walter Scott, did not boast more ample accommodation. Four-and-twenty steeds may here be kept ready for war or chase. The gardens of Mitchelstown have long been celebrated; the noble earl himself took especial pleasure in them. It is indeed a remarkable sight to see the long range of graperies thrown open. As far as the eye can see, festoons of grapes are pendant; some are of rare sorts. The black Hamburg grape is brought to the utmost perfection here, and there is one vine which, in point of size, both of vine

and fruit, is said to rival the famed produce of the vine at Hampton Court. There is also a lodge expressly devoted for the reception of picnic parties, who from time immemorial have been permitted the free range of all the grounds and gardens, and inspection of the castle upon application at the door. Many a family fault and failing may be considered amply redeemed by this liberal attention to the stranger. When Englishmen hear of noblemen's seats which there is a difficulty in visiting, they may remember the case of Mitchelstown, where every visitor, of whatever station, was provided for, welcomed, and even invited to return."

One day, however, a heavy blow fell on Mitchelstown Castle and its generous-hearted lord. I shall let the same kindly Englishman tell the story, although he was misled, as I shall show, in one or two particulars :—

"The present proprietor of the estate was distinguished for his hospitality. It would have been, under other circumstances, a noble trait in his character. Lord Kingston did that which the wealthier noblemen of England are far too slow to do. He invited to Mitchelstown, without distinction of rank or title, all who could derive

enjoyment from it. 'If you are a scholar,' said the noble lord, 'you shall be conducted to scenes renowned in history; if you are a lover of the picturesque, you shall have a room commanding a dozen prospects; if you are a sportsman, the horse and hound invite you to follow them; or there are hills abounding with grouse, and streams alive with trout. Bring your gun, your rod, your pencil, or your book, you shall be equally welcome and equally gratified. Come and visit me at Mitchelstown.'

"It was in the midst of one of these hospitable gatherings that the last blow was struck at the descendant of Clongibbon. A cruel blow it was, and deservedly execrated will be the man who struck it. It was a Saturday evening; a hundred guests were preparing for the dinner-table at Mitchelstown, after the sports and enjoyments of the day. At this moment there rode up to the door an unexpected visitor. He was an attorney of the neighbourhood, to whose hands Lord Kingston had confided the direction of some of his affairs. A debt for the costs appertaining to these proceedings had been met by a bond, upon which judgment had been entered up. The bond only awaited execution, but there was no appre-

hension that the money would be pressed for. When the attorney arrived, he was welcomed by Lord Kingston with his usual hospitality. He accepted an invitation to remain the night, and he partook of the hospitality of the castle and quaffed its wine to the health and happiness of his host.

"On the following morning, when Lord Kingston and his party were about to repair to the adjacent church, the attorney excused himself on the plea of indisposition. During the absence of the guests he was observed admiring the grandeur of the rooms. He examined the furniture, the books, the plate upon the sideboards, the chandeliers pendant from the ceilings. Early in the day he took his departure. Lord Kingston little augured what would follow it.

"A day or two after, Lord Kingston was visited at Mitchelstown by a gentleman well known to him, who requested the favour of a private interview. It was the sheriff of the county. He came, he said, on a most unpleasant duty. An execution had been issued at the suit of the attorney, and he had received notice to put it in immediate force, together with particulars of furniture and other articles within the castle on which levy could be made, and which he was called upon to seize.

The sheriff assured Lord Kingston the execution should be put in such a way as would give him least annoyance. The officer, he said, could be treated as a servant, and he trusted that the matter would be so arranged that he would be very speedily withdrawn.

"The sheriff then withdrew to summon the officer, whom, in delicacy to Lord Kingston, he had left without the bounds of the demesne. Whilst he was absent, Lord Kingston hastily called some of his friends together and consulted with them. Some of the least judicious recommended him to close the doors. The noble lord was ill-advised enough to act on this suggestion. The castle doors were barred, and the earl and such of the party as remained his guests determined to stand out a siege.

"The sheriff had behaved in the spirit of a gentleman, and even of a friend. It was now his duty to act as administrator of the law. He closely invested the castle and its grounds, directing his officers to obtain possession in any way they could. For nearly a fortnight the siege continued. During that time several councils of war were called within the building. At length the more moderate prevailed; they advised Lord Kingston

to surrender at discretion. No succour was at hand, and the present proceedings, they suggested, would only increase the irritation which these proceedings had produced on both sides. It was accordingly determined to admit the officers. Late on the evening of that day Lord Kingston drove away for the last time from the home of his ancestors, and the sheriff's men were summoned in to take possession of the castle and its property."

This story, so sympathetically told, was sadly true; but my information lays the date of its occurrence some few years anterior to the time here indicated. I rather think the seizure thus described took place in 1845 or 1847, at the instance of a Mr. J. W. Sherlock, solicitor, of Fermoy. The final execution was levied in 1849, at the instance of a family group, of whom we shall hear more in a subsequent chapter—the Sadleir-Scully family. The foreclosed mortgage on which the Kingston estates were sold out in 1850 had been made to Thomas Joseph Eyre, William Stourton, James Scully, and James Sadleir. Mr. Eyre appointed his relative, Mr. John Sadleir, M.P. for Carlow borough, receiver over the estates. Mr. Sadleir organised a land company to purchase the property. The shares in this

company later on passed mainly into the hands of two of the directors, of whom Mr. Nathaniel Buckley, a Lancashire manufacturer, was one. Mr. Buckley bought out, or otherwise arranged with, his colleague, and became lord of the place, appointing as his agent Mr. Patten S. Bridge, who, on the crash of the Sadleir bank in 1856, was manager of the Thurles branch. Deplorable incidents of recent occurrence have given a gloomy notoriety, for the passing moment, to this same Mitchelstown estate, and have brought into distressing prominence the names of Mr. Buckley and Mr. Patten S. Bridge.*

Towards the close of 1847, or early in 1848, it became noised about in Ireland that the Government contemplated a scheme for removing the debt-loaded landlord class in Ireland. The necessity for some such step, its usefulness, its national importance, none could deny, and none more freely admitted than the Irish proprietors themselves. Without touching on the broader and

* Twice within the past two years Mr. Bridge has been murderously waylaid. On the last occasion a regular fusilade was exchanged between his armed escort of police and the assassins. Mr. Bridge escaped, but his coachman was shot dead.

deeper question of the abstract utility of facilitating the transfer of land and its sale in small parcels, there were in Ireland peculiar reasons why such a project must be beneficial. A large section of the landlord class were little better than nominal proprietors. A mountain-load of mortgages or a network of settlements rendered them powerless to attempt or carry out any of the numerous reforms and improvements which a really free and independent owner might arrange with his tenantry. Many an Irish gentleman with a nominal rent-roll of thousands or tens of thousands a year, possessed in reality to his own use scarcely so many hundreds. To not a few of the class the hollowness and unreality of their position had become intolerable. The lord of some ancient mansion or ivied castle, with estates that reached in miles on either hand, often envied the humble merchant of £500 a year, who had no state to maintain, no retinue to support, no false position in society to uphold. With men so circumstanced, indulgence to their tenantry was almost impossible, and the temptation to cupidity, to rack-renting, and to extortion was strong and ever pressing. It was true statesmanship to afford a cure for evils so serious and so complicated.

The Irish Encumbered Estates Act, regarded in this sense, was one of the greatest legislative boons ever conferred on Ireland. In its actual results, good and evil, hurt and service, cause for satisfaction and cause for regret, are considerably mingled. In some very important particulars the expectations and designs of its promoters have been disappointed and contradicted. But when every allowance has been made, there still is to be said that a great and incalculable gain has been achieved, though at somewhat of painful price.

The measure, excellent in itself, was proposed and presented to Ireland at such a time and under such circumstances as to give it a decidedly sinister aspect. To no man, to no class of men, can a sentence of abolition or extinction be welcome at any time. "Life is sweet." But when men feel that special advantage is taken of a special misfortune in order to encompass their destruction, for no matter how great a public good—if they are "struck when down"—they regard the proceeding with a peculiar bitterness. Thus felt many an Irish landlord the proposal of the Encumbered Estates Act. It came upon him, he would say, when he needed rather indulgence,

consideration, and aid. It caught him in a moment of helplessness and exhaustion. Whatever chance he might have of retrieving his position at any other time, he had none now. Landed property was a drug in the market. On many estates no rents had been paid during the famine. On some the poor-rates had reached twenty shillings in the pound of yearly valuation. To challenge Irish landlords at such a moment with the stern ultimatum of "Pay or quit" was naked destruction. To visit upon them at the close of the famine the penalty for inherited indebtedness and embarrassment was, in many cases, sacrificing the innocent for the sins of their forefathers—sacrificing them under circumstances of peculiar hardship and injustice. In fine, the Encumbered Estates Act ought to have been passed long years before—in some period of tranquillity and comparative plenty. Enacted when it was, it could but wear an aspect of harshness or hostility; could accomplish its unquestionably useful aims only at the cost of excessive sacrifice and suffering.

What were those aims? They were stated in one way, had one meaning, in the bill brought into Parliament; they were stated very differently in the leading organs of English public opinion.

On the face of the Government measure one could read fairly enough a proposal to enable a court specially constituted to order the sale of estates encumbered by indebtedness, on the petition so praying of any person sufficiently interested as owner or creditor; all statutes, settlements, deeds, or covenants to the contrary notwithstanding; to the end that debts justly due might be paid so far as the property could answer them; that a proprietary emancipated from the injurious restraints of family settlements and the crushing burdens of family debts might be brought to the aid of the Irish land system; and that a concise, simple, and indefeasible form of title might be substituted for the voluminous, confused, and ponderous legal scrolls in which title to landed property was hitherto set forth. So manifestly useful were such proposals, so valuable to any country a tribunal with such powers, that one is at a loss to understand why (as some of the Irish peers and members of Parliament asked at the time) the bill was not applied to England and Scotland, and was to extend to Ireland alone. The comments and glossary of some English newspapers seemed to supply an answer to this very natural interrogatory, but it was one not

calculated to recommend the bill in Ireland. We were told to read between the lines of the Government measure a plan for the more sure effectuation of the new plantation. Not alone were the Irish tenantry to be replaced by English and lowland-Scotch "colonists," but the Irish landlords also were to be cleared off, an English proprietary being established in their stead. "English capital" was at long last to flow into Ireland in the purchase of these estates. The dream of Elizabeth and James and Charles was to be accomplished in the reign of Victoria. The island was to be peopled by a new race; was to be anglicised "from the centre to the sea." In truth, between evictions and emigration on the one hand, and the working of the Encumbered Estates Court on the other, so it seemed that it would be. "In a few years more," said the London *Times*, "a Celtic Irishman will be as rare in Connemara as is the Red Indian on the shores of Manhattan."

If the bullock being led to the abattoir could understand and be consoled by remarks upon the excellent sirloin and juicy steak which he was sure to furnish, so ought the Irish landlords and tenants to have taken kindly the able speeches and learned leading articles which declared they

were being slaughtered for the public good. But they had not a philosophy equal to this lofty view of things, and they called it hard names.

In the early days of February 1848 the Irish Encumbered Estates Bill was introduced into the House of Lords. On the 24th of February it was read a second time. Through the months of March and April it lay *perdu*, the Government and the country apparently being engrossed with the more exciting and exigent topics of the period. On the 8th of May, however, the Lords suddenly resumed consideration of the bill, and, making up for lost time, passed it through all remaining stages in two or three days! A week subsequently it was introduced in the Commons, and on the 18th of May was read a second time with less of debate than would now be given to a parish gas-bill. Not an Irish member seems to have opened his lips at this stage on a measure which was designed and calculated to effect the most momentous changes in Ireland! On the 4th of July Sir Lucius O'Brien, afterwards Lord Inchiquin, then member for Clare, raised a rather protracted debate by an amendment proposing to extend the bill to England—a suggestion strongly opposed and easily defeated by the Government. On the

13th of July the bill went through committee. On the 24th of July 1848 it passed the third reading, and in a few days more was law.

On the 21st of October 1849 the first "Petition for Sale" was filed under the new act; and there soon set in a state of things which most people foresaw: a rush of creditors to the court, an inevitable sacrifice of property. As in a commercial panic, men who at first had never dreamed of selling, beholding the hourly increasing depreciation, rushed wildly in and accelerated the downward tendency of prices. In this storm many a noble fortune was wrecked, many an ancient and honoured family went down. Estates that would have been well able to pay twice the encumbrances laid upon them, if property was at all near its ordinary level of value, now failed to realise enough to meet the mortgages, and the proprietors were devoted to ruin.

I have already told or quoted the story of the Kingston estates. The history of the early operations of the new court is full of such episodes. Second only to Lord Kingston's case in the sympathy which it called forth was that of Lord Gort. Amongst the names retained in Irish popular

memory of the men who stood by "ever-glorious Grattan," in the last days of the Irish parliament, that of Colonel the Right Hon. Charles Vereker, M.P., is honourably placed. Hurriedly called to the field by the alarm of a French landing at Killala, he was put in command of the first troops assembled to resist the eastward march of the Franco-Irish force; and he it was who, at Coloony, near Sligo, first reversed the disgrace of the British flight at Castlebar. For this he was made Viscount Gort, taking his title from the neat little town which adjoined the family demesne at Lough Cooter Castle.* The French were finally defeated by Lord Lake at Ballinamuck, and Colonel Vereker returned from the camp to the senate; from a fight for his king against Humbert, to a fight for his country against Pitt. His name figures to the last in the division-lists against the Union. In 1850 his son, John P. Vereker, was owner of the castle and estates when the thunderbolt that laid

* The Right Hon. Colonel Vereker of Coloony had the peerage granted to his uncle John Prendergast of Gort, whose heir he was, and whose property he inherited, with special remainder to himself. He accordingly inherited the title on his uncle's death as second viscount. The flight referred to was called "the races of Castlebar," and as such is still referred to in the neighbourhood.

even prouder houses low fell heavily and undeservedly on his.

Lough Cooter Castle, one of the "show places" of the western counties, stands on the edge of the lake from which it takes its name, two miles from the town of Gort, in Galway county. The castle is quite modern, having been erected at a cost of about £80,000 by the second viscount, from plans by Nash, the renovator and architect of the newly added portion of Windsor Castle. It is described as built in "the severe Gothic" style. The walls are of massive solidity, and constructed of beautifully chiselled limestone. The lake covers an area of nearly eight square miles, and is studded with wooded islands. One of these has been for years the home of innumerable herons and cormorants; perhaps the only instance on record of an island in a fresh-water lake being inhabited by the latter birds. The Gort river flows out of the lake, and, at a romantic glen known as "the Punchbowl," distant about a mile, falls into a deep rocky abyss, totally disappearing underground till it reaches Cannohoun. Here it rushes out of a rocky cavern, and thence flows through Gort, where it turns several mills, and falling again, makes its way—appearing and sinking several times—through

the sands into Kinvarra Bay, six miles from Gort.

The Gort unsettled estates lay under a debt in all of about £60,000. In 1842 they were valued, for family arrangement purposes, at £150,000, but were always considered to be worth much more. Eighteen hundred and forty-seven found Lord Gort a resident landlord, bravely doing his duty; refusing to fly, scorning to abandon his tenantry. "His lordship," says one of the Irish newspapers, "was always opposed to the clearance system, which he characterised as merciless and unjustifiable, and endeavoured practically to prove that a resident landlord, by availing himself of the opportunities that occurred from time to time, could consolidate the farms on his estates, and introduce every modern improvement, without desolating a single happy homestead or alienating the affections of his tenantry." The famine came; rents could not be paid, and Lord Gort would not resort to heartless means of attempting to extort them. The interest on the mortgage fell in arrear; the mortgagee, taking advantage of a clause in his mortgage-deed, discharged the local land-agent, and appointed in his stead a London attorney, who, I believe, had never seen the place, and never visited it even

when acting as receiver over it. A petition for sale of the property was lodged in Chancery, whence the proceedings were transferred to the new court created by the Encumbered Estates Act. One may imagine the feelings of Lord Gort and his family, for they but too well knew what a forced sale of landed property at such a moment meant. Their worst fears were realised. They saw their beautiful home—their castle and lake and lands—swept away; sold at panic prices. An estate that should have left them a handsome income beyond every conceivable claim was unable to free the mortgage! Right well they knew—as indeed subsequently happened—that in a few years these ancestral acres, thus torn from them for ever, would be sold again at very nearly double their present price. Thirteen years' purchase was, I believe, the highest given at this sale. Many lots were sold at five. Some portions of the property recently resold have fetched twenty-five and twenty-seven! Lough Cooter Castle, worth from £50,000 to £60,000, was sold for £17,000. The fortunate purchaser—Mrs. Ball, Superioress of the Religious Order of Mercy, Dublin, who intended converting it into a novitiate house for the order—resold it soon after for £24,000. Lot 1, valua-

tion £560 a year, realised but £3,000. Lot 2, valuation £155, brought £600. The Board of Ordnance bought Lord Gort's profit-rent of £80, out of the Gort cavalry barracks, the valuation being £283 a year, for £1450. The constabulary barracks and other premises, valued at £123, fetched £700. The town-lands, valued at £579 a year, were bought by the mortgagee for £2,800, or less than five years' purchase. No wonder that sympathy with the Vereker family was wide and general. The day they quitted Lough Cooter, the people surrounded them with every demonstration of attachment and respect, and waved them, along the road, a sorrowful farewell!

I should have hesitated, indeed, to touch on a subject so full of pain as this must ever be to that family, were it not that fortunate circumstances have, happily, since then retrieved those unmerited disasters, and restored, or rather retained, to them, the *status* which for a moment seemed so cruelly overthrown. In East Cowes Castle (adjoining Osborne), the present seat of the Gort family, they must find much to remind them of, and recompense them for, the equally beautiful spot once their home on Lough Cooter; though I doubt not they would rather see from the castle-windows the island-

studded Irish lough than the flashing waters of the Solent. It is a curious coincidence that East Cowes Castle and Lough Cooter Castle were erected from designs by the same hand, the former having been built by Nash for his own residence. At the beginning of the present century, the Prince Regent and Lord Gort were on a visit there, when the latter said to the host, "How I wish I could transport this castle to the banks of Lough Cooter!" "Give me £50,000 and I'll do it for you," replied Nash. The viscount took him at his word; and Nash built the Irish castle, which, however, eventually cost more than £20,000 beyond the sum first named. By what a strange revolution of fortune it has come to pass that the family should lose the one and find their home in the other mansion!

The catastrophes incidental to the early operations of the Encumbered Estates Act were sure to prejudice Irish opinion against it, and to obscure from view the merits and advantages of the system it inaugurated. So far from the famine period being an "opportunity" for such a measure, that was just the time when it ought to have been withheld. Forced into operation under circumstances so abnormal, it worked, during the first five years of its labours, the minimum of benefit

with the maximum of suffering and sacrifice. From 1855 to 1875 the functions of the new court have had fairer scope,* and its work has been more justly appreciated; and no one in Ireland would now deny the advantage of a system which so largely frees and simplifies the transfer of land. I subjoin an exhibit of the proceedings from the filing of the first petition, 25th of October 1849, to 31st of August 1857, being the concluding day of the seventh "session" of the commission :—

1. Number of petitions presented, including those for partition and exchange, as well as for sale . . 4164
   (Of the above, about 800 were supplemental, drawn, and dismissed petitions.)
2. Number of absolute orders for sale . . . 3341
3. Number of matters in which owners presented petitions 1245
   (Of the first 100 petitions, six were presented by owners. Of the last 100 petitions, the owners of estates presented fifty-three.)
4. Number of matters in which owners were bankrupts or insolvents. 357
   (In very many other cases, the owners of estates became bankrupts or insolvents after the petitions were presented, and the proceedings were subsequently carried on in the name of their assignees.)

* By a supplementary or extending act—the Irish Landed Estates Act—in 1858 the powers of the court were extended to include properties not encumbered.

5. Number of conveyances executed by the commissioners 7283

6. Number of estates or parts of estates sold by provincial auction, subsequently confirmed by the commissioners 338

By private proposal, accepted by the commissioners

The remainder of the premises comprised in the above 7283 conveyances were all sold by public auction, in court, before the commissioners.

7. Number of lots, viz.:—

By public auction, in court . . .	7270	
By provincial auction	1436	
By private contract	1621	
		10,327

When the same person became the purchaser of several lots he generally had them included in the same conveyance.

8. Number of boxes containing upwards of 250,000 documents and muniments of title, deposited in the Record Office . . . . . 23[illegible]

9. Number of cases which had been pending in the Court of Chancery before being brought into the Encumbered Estates Court . . . . 1[illegible]

10. Number of Irish purchasers . . . . 7[illegible]

11. Number of English, Scotch, and foreign purchasers [illegible]

12. Amount of purchase-money paid by English, Scotch, and foreign purchasers £2,836,225 0 0

13. Gross proceeds of sale to 31st August 1857:—

By public auction, in court . .	£13,941,207	10	0
By provincial auction . .	2,824,381	0	0
By private contract . . .	3,710,367	18	4
	£20,475,956	8	4

The largest estate sold within that period—the largest ever sold by the court—was that of the Earl of Portarlington, which realised £700,000. Very nearly the next in extent was that of Lord Mountcashel—61,711 acres, with a yearly rental of £18,500—which was sold for £240,000. Lord Mountcashel, who considered himself treated with peculiar harshness and injustice by the petitioners, was greatly angered with Mr. Commissioner Hargreave, before whom the sale was consummated. The commissioner, as is well remembered in Dublin, was a very small-sized gentleman, and his office was situate on the bedroom story of the house 14 Henrietta Street, at that time used as the Landed Estates Court. Lord Mountcashel, during the proceedings, was heard to exclaim that it was bad enough to have his estates confiscated, but to be "sold up by a dwarf in a garret" was more than he could endure!

Since 1860 the transactions in the court have considerably changed in character. Adverse petitions by encumbrancers grow fewer, and applications by owners themselves, anxious to simplify title and to disentangle family settlements and arrangements, grow more and more frequent. The tribunal once viewed with such gloomy aversion

is now regarded with something akin to national favour.

The anticipations and prophecies about "English capital" have all proved illusory. It will be noticed from the statistics given above that up to August 1857, out of 7489 purchasers, 7180 were Irish; only 309 were "English, Scotch, or foreigners." Out of £20,475,956 realised by the court up to the same date, more than five-sixths of the amount, or £17,639,731, was *Irish* capital, invested by Irish purchasers; and although I am unable to verify the exact figures of the interval since then, I believe the proportion between Irish and non-Irish purchasers remains very much the same to the present time. English capital has preferred Turkish bonds and Honduras loans.

The tenantry in many instances complain that they have gained little and lost much in the change from the old masters to the new. The latter are chiefly mercantile men who have saved money in trade, and invest it for a safe percentage. They import what the country people depreciatingly call "the ledger and day-book principle" into the management of their purchases, which contrasts unfavourably in their minds with the more elastic system of the old owners. Although not blind to

the hardships which often attend this greater strictness, I consider the new system has introduced few more valuable reforms than this which enforces method, punctuality, and precision in the half-yearly settlements between landlord and tenant in Ireland. It is not conducive to a manly independence that the occupier should be permanently "behindhand with his rent"; that is to say, beholden to the favour and sufferance of his lord. Much of the subjection and the slavishness of peasant life in the old Ireland grew out of this habitual arrear; and one must honestly rejoice if it be changed in the new.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE TENANT LEAGUE.

It was not to be expected that the enormous dimensions to which the "Famine clearances" had attained would fail to evoke some protest of public opinion. By 1850 the eviction scenes had filled the land with uneasiness and alarm. The theory that had for a while lulled the country into a sort of tolerance of them—namely, that clearances and emigration would make things "better for those who went, and for those who remained"—gave place to apprehensions that intensified every day. As early as the spring of 1849, public meetings began to give a voice to the general sentiment, and ere many months the whole island was in moral revolt. Not one province alone—not one geographical section alone, as had hitherto been the case—declared for resistance. The sturdy Presbyterians of Down and Antrim and Derry

were as resolute as the quick-blooded Catholic Celts of Cork and Mayo and Tipperary. For the first time in fifty years Ulster held out a hand to Munster in fraternal grasp. The ruin that had desolated the other provinces was beginning its work of destruction in the north.

In studying the Irish land question, one is confronted *in limine* by what is called the "Ulster custom," or the "Ulster tenant-right." To this custom, or right, Ulster is admittedly indebted for the exceptional prosperity and contentment of its agricultural population. To the absence of that custom—the denial of any such right—elsewhere in Ireland may be most largely attributed the dismal contrast which has prevailed in these respects. This Ulster system has within the past century been somewhat encroached upon, and now varies in different parts of the province, and even on different properties of the same owner. It grew out of the spirit more than the letter of the charters and grants under which Ulster was "planted" in the reign of James I. Substantially it was a right of continuous occupancy by the tenant, at a fair rent; one not raised by reason of any value added to the soil by the tenant's industry or outlay. This right of occupancy grew to be in the aggregate a

vast property, according as the tenants improved the soil and increased the value of their holdings. The tenant-right of many properties exceeded in value the fee-simple purchase. A property, be it supposed, the fair value of which, exclusive of tenant's improvements, was judged to be £10,000 a year, or £250,000 in all, half a century ago, had, by the labour and capital of the tenants expended thereupon, become value for £20,000 a year, or £500,000. Of this the landlord still owned but his £250,000; the other £250,000 belonged to the tenantry; was recognised to be as fully and legally theirs as the landlord's fee-simple was his. This tenant-right was bought and sold daily; that is, the out-going sold to the in-coming tenant his interest in the farm. On a farm of fifty acres an Ulster tenant has often obtained twenty years', sometimes thirty years', purchase of the margin between his rent and the valuation, probably a sum of £3000. If a landlord wished to evict a tenant, he could do so by buying up from him the tenant-right of the farm. He could, of course, evict for non-payment of rent, or other reasons; but in every such case he was bound to hand over in cash to the evicted tenant any balance remaining out of the marketable value of the tenant-right of

the holding after deducting the amount of rent, costs, or damages legally due. Or (very much the same in effect) the landlord might say to the tenant: "You are not paying your rent; you are wasting your farm; you must quit; go sell as best you can your tenant-right; pay me my claims, and go."

Under this system—unknown, or rather unrecognised by law, outside of Ulster—that province bloomed like a garden, and became the home of thrift and plenty, of contentment and prosperity, even before the energy of its people, applied to manufacturing industries, had opened for them new paths to wealth.

How was it that this system, so fruitful in good result, was established in one province alone? Why have the efforts of the tenant class elsewhere to obtain like rights been so steadily and vehemently resisted?

The answer is neither pleasant to tell nor agreeable to hear. Because Ulster was a "Plantation colony"; because in Ulster the plantation landlords got their lands on implied or expressed condition of "planting" them—rooting a population in the soil; whereas elsewhere the policy of the time was to unplant, to uproot, to clear away the Popish natives. Even where, in the other provinces, in

course of time the uprooting became too odious or too dangerous, there still remained this much of its essence, in strong contrast to "the Ulster custom," namely, the axiom that the tenant had *no* right of continuous occupancy, held only from year to year on the landlord's sufferance, and was not regarded in law as owning a shilling's worth of even his own outlay. If *he* drained or improved, so that bog-land worth two shillings an acre was made corn-land worth as many pounds, the landlord was legally entitled to call that improvement *his*, and to make that tenant pay £2 an acre for that land.

What could come of such a system as this, the cruel opposite of the "Ulster right," but a state of agriculture and a state of society the reverse of that which smiled on the northern province? Negligence in place of thrift; squalor in place of comfort and neatness; hovels in place of houses;*

* There can be no doubt that the wretchedness of Irish peasant homes, their grievous disregard of comfort, neatness, or cleanliness, was derived almost entirely from the idea that improvement would invoke a rise of rent. When I was a boy I was full of a glowing zeal for "cottage flower-gardens" and removal of threshold dung-heaps; but my exhortations were all to no purpose. I was extinguished by the remark: "Begor, sir, if we make the place so nate as *that*, the agint will say we are able to pay more rint."

insecurity, mistrust, ill-will, hostility between landlord and tenant; a hatred of the Government, and a deadly hostility to the law, that drew this line of distinction, this line of oppression and wrong, between the Protestant north and the Popish south. If happily the evils one would have thought inevitable were not everywhere visible, it was in spite of the system, not because of it. If the landlord did not in every case appropriate in the shape of a raised rent the fruits of the tenant's industry, it was because that particular landlord or family was more honest than the law.

In a differently constituted community—in a country where proprietor and cultivator were of one race and faith, boasted of the same nationality, and were on the whole moved by the same political aims—this system might perhaps work but little evil; although the empowering of one class to profit by wronging another generally produces social conflict. But in the Celtic Catholic provinces of Ireland, where the soil was, as a rule, given over to be owned by men of one nation and creed, and tilled by men of another race and faith; where lord and peasant represented conqueror and conquered, what was such a code calculated to bring forth?

Besides, it was not merely that the farmers of Munster, Connaught, and Leinster saw equity made to be the law in the Protestant corner of the island, but that, moreover, this same right of continuous occupancy, at a fair rent or "lord's tribute," was, in truth, their own ancient Celtic tenure, to which they clung with inveterate tenacity. The subjection of Ireland to the English Crown—the confiscations of six centuries—meant, in their minds, change of masters to whom rent was payable; but never a change which annihilated their right to occupy the land on payment of its rent. In theory of law, no doubt, the new system came in when the Brehon Code disappeared in 1607; but for two centuries afterwards the full nature and extent of the change as to land tenure was not recognised by the agricultural population. The treaty between England and Ireland, concluded on the capitulation of Limerick in 1691, contained many hard terms, though it secured some valuable rights for the latter country, which, though the pact was broken on the other side, never drew hostile sword again for more than a hundred years. Had the masses of the population, however, realised that it was not merely a change of landlords, but a loss of right to live upon the

soil, that the revolution brought for them, they would have bathed the island in blood before they submitted. As it was, according as the dreadful reality slowly dawned on them, they resisted it in their isolated, disorganised, and lawless way, by the rude and horrible warfare known in our sad annals as "agrarian outrage." The "Rapparees" and "Tories" of the last century—the "Whitefeet," the "Terryalts," the "Rockites," the "Defenders," the "Ribbonmen" of a later period—all these agrarian combinations and conspiracies were merely so many phases in what has been aptly called "a low form of civil war."

But, it may be asked, how should Ulster tenants, blessed with so secure a tenure, and with property so well protected, suffer by the ills which led to "clearances" elsewhere in 1849 and 1850? The answer and explanation bring into view a feature or result of the Ulster system which few persons, even in that province itself, seem to have perceived. The Ulster custom was almost exclusively beneficial for the tenant as long as things went well; but if a series of adverse seasons came, and the value of farm-holdings fell, the loss was exclusively his. Before the landlord's interest could be affected to the extent of a shilling, the tenant-right, equal

in value to the fee-simple, should first be consumed. The rent was always a first lien on that tenant-right; and as long as at an auction it would fetch a penny more than the rent, the landlord was in no way to suffer by "bad times." Of course there were to be found several Ulster landlords who in '48, '49, and '50 disdained to stand in this way on their undoubted right, and who stepped forward voluntarily to assist their tenantry; but as a matter of fact the whole of the famine losses came out of the margin of value which, in the form of tenant-right interest, stood between the landlords and any touch of disaster. The occasion, moreover, was seized by some of the northern landlords to buy up in hard bargains of the necessitous tenant, or to encroach upon and cramp and squeeze the ancient rights of which the Ulster farmers were so proud; so that in 1850 the *Derry Standard* and *Banner of Ulster* newspapers were as "seditiously" violent in language as the *Nation*, the *Cork Examiner*, or the *Freeman's Journal*.

Following upon the public meetings came the formation of what were called "Tenant Protection Societies." The first in point of time was established in Callan, county Kilkenny, where two young curates of the Catholic Church—Rev. Thomas O'Shea and

Rev. Matthew Keeffe—had, by their passionate eloquence and earnest enthusiasm, aroused the whole population. But the north, the men of Ulster, led by the honoured veteran of the tenant's cause, William Sharman Crawford, M.P., early took the front. It was not alone in their press and on their platforms the Ulster Presbyterians agitated tenant-right; they imported it into their strictly ecclesiastical assemblages or synods, much to the horror of some of the elders. When the Rev. Mr. Rogers, of Comber, moved a resolution in the Presbyterian Synod of Ulster (May 1850), that a petition be presented to Parliament in favour of tenant-right, Dr. Cooke said it was dreadful. Not that he was less ardent as a tenant-righter than the youngest of them; but he had heard "rank communism" preached by some of the reverend brethren around him. Mr. Potter, of Islandmagee, asked him what he meant—the Land question was intimately connected with the moral and religious condition of their people. Dr. Cooke replied that some of the brethren had committed communism by "attacks on the nobility and aristocracy of the land, thus violating the word of God, which says, 'Thou shalt not speak evil of the ruler of my people'"; which he interpreted there and then to

mean, not merely the Queen, but all concerned in governing the country. This was rather too much for the synod.

Rev. Mr. ROGERS—"With regard to the Socialist doctrines alleged to have been taught by tenant-right advocates, I shall just say that for the last two hundred years Socialism has been all on the other side (hear, hear). The entire outlay of the tenant-farmers has gone periodically into the pockets of the landlords. A small minority have swallowed up the property of nine-tenths of the province——"

Dr. COOKE.—"Now, here it is; we have Socialism preached here in the synod!"

Mr. ROGERS.—"I state a fact. It would seem to be forgotten by some members that the poor man has property which should be as fully secured as that of the rich."

Eventually, by a large majority, the synod resolved: "That the synod do petition Parliament that whatever measure they may adopt to adjust the relations of landlord and tenant in Ireland, such measure shall secure to the tenant-farmers of Ulster, in all its integrity, the prescriptive usage of that province, known by the name of tenant-right."

Then came the adoption of the petition referred to, when ground was for the first time boldly taken by those Presbyterian clergymen on an issue which at the present hour, in 1877, occupies the attention of Parliament—the extension by law to the rest of Ireland of rights and securities analagous to those of the Ulster custom. Dr. Cooke in grief declared that this was what came of the public sin of Presbyterian ministers being seen on the one political platform with Romish priests. Then:—

Mr. ROGERS.—"There has been a serious objection raised against me in reference to my conduct because I have co-operated with Popish priests. I may have been wrong in so doing; and all I wish to say on the subject is that in doing it I was only following the example of Dr. Cooke."

Dr. COOKE.—"I defy you to show I ever co-operated with one. Where or when was it?"

Mr. ROGERS.—"Precisely in reference to the site of the Queen's College. I was present at a meeting at which Dr. Cooke and Dr. Denvir, Catholic bishop, were both present."

This dreadful imputation, however, the venerable old clergyman was able to disprove; but he could not shake the determination of the synod to

pass its approval of the great agitation now proceeding out of doors.

The evil which so appalled Dr. Cooke—Presbyterian and Catholic clergymen co-operating on the same platform—was soon to obtain wide dimensions. The necessity for a central authority to take charge of the new movement had become deeply felt; and it was a very obvious advantage to organise in one great association the numerous tenant societies, and like local bodies, so far working independently all over the island. On the 27th of April 1850, the following announcement appeared in the Irish newspapers:—

A conference is about to be summoned in Dublin in which the tenant societies of the four provinces will have an opportunity of comparing their views and taking measures together. The parties who have united in summoning it belong to all sections of the popular party, and have nothing in common but a desire to bring this question to a satisfactory settlement. Their circular is about being sent to all existing tenant societies, to the popular journalists, and to the most active and influential friends of tenant-right in localities which have not yet been organised.

The circular was signed by three prominent representative men, of as many different creeds —Dr. (subsequently Sir John) Gray, proprietor and editor of the *Freeman's Journal*, Church of

England Protestant; Samuel McCurdy Greer, barrister-at-law (subsequently member for Derry county), Ulster Presbyterian; and Frederick Lucas, proprietor and editor of the *Tablet*, Catholic. The proposal was enthusiastically approved throughout the kingdom. In every province and every county there was, during the early summer months, but the one subject of public effort, anxiety, and interest — the forthcoming Tenant Conference.

On the 6th of August 1850, a truly remarkable assemblage filled to overflowing the City Assembly House, William Street, Dublin, the use of which was specially voted by the Civic Council. The sharp Scottish accent of Ulster mingled with the broad Doric of Munster. Presbyterian ministers greeted "Popish priests" with fraternal fervour. Mr. James Godkin, editor of the staunch covenanting *Derry Standard* (a gentleman whose signal literary abilities have been consistently devoted to the impartial service of Irish interests), sat side by side with John Francis Maguire of the Ultramontane *Cork Examiner*. Magistrates and landlords were there; while of tenant delegates every province sent up a great array. By general acclaim an Ulster Presbyterian journalist, James

McKnight, LL.D.,* editor of the *Banner of Ulster*, was voted to the chair. The conference sat for four days. Resolutions were adopted declaring that "a fair valuation of rent between landlord and tenant in Ireland" was indispensable; that "the tenant should not be disturbed in his possession so long as he paid such rent"; and that "the tenant should have a right to sell his interest with all its incidents at the highest market value."

Early in its deliberations the Conference was confronted with a subject of some difficulty. During the famine years there had accrued all over the country arrears of rent, which, even where not pressed for and made the excuse for immediate eviction, remained "on the books" against the tenantry, hanging over them like a sword of Damocles. It was felt that a really wise national Government would declare "arrears" which had thus accrued—by a dreadful visitation of Providence, prolonged through three or four years—a public burden to be discharged or commuted by the

* It is but a year since Dr. McKnight closed a long life of honourable labour in the service of his co-religionists and countrymen of Ulster. In learning and ability, as well as in high personal character, he stood amongst the front rank of Irish press-men.

State. The conference was clearly of opinion that it would be vain trying to settle the Irish Land question if, by reason of these "famine arrears," the whole tenantry might at any moment be overwhelmed. Eventually this resolution was adopted:—

That in any valuation which shall be made before the 31st December ——, the valuators shall, on the demand of either landlord or tenant, inquire into the arrears of rent due by the tenant; shall estimate the amount which during the famine years would have been due and payable for rent under a valuation, if such had been made, according to the prices and circumstances of same years and also the amount which during the same period has actually been paid for rent to the landlord; shall award the balance, if any, to be the arrears then due; and that the amount so awarded for arrears be payable by instalments at such period as shall be fixed by the valuators, and shall be recoverable in all respects as if it were rent.

On the third day a new organisation was established, called "The Irish Tenant League." On the fourth a Council was chosen, consisting of 120 gentlemen from the four provinces, and the Conference separated, having contributed to Irish political history within this generation one of its most notable events. Many leading men in England quickly realised the import of what had been done. The Conference had barely closed its sittings when

Mr. John Bright drew attention to the subject in the House of Commons :—

The noble lord at the head of the Government had referred to a few bills; amongst the rest to the Landlord and Tenant Bill. That subject was now a matter of the first importance, not alone as regarded the people of Ireland, but with regard to what had just taken place (hear, hear). A Conference had been sitting in Dublin of earnest men from all parts of Ireland (hear, hear). Now, sir (continued the honourable gentleman), without agreeing in all that has been said and done by that Conference, we cannot shut our eyes to the fact of its importance, and that it will be the means of evoking a more formidable agitation than has been witnessed for many years (hear, hear). Instead of the agitation being confined, as heretofore, to the Roman Catholics and their clergy, Protestant and Dissenting clergymen seem to be amalgamated with Roman Catholics at present; indeed there seems an amalgamation of all sects on this question, and I think it time the House should resolutely legislate on it (hear, hear).

That was August 1850. John Bright was before his time. Twenty years subsequently—after feelings had been embittered, hopes betrayed, homes wrecked, families scattered, and passions roused to fury—the House of Commons found a minister of the Crown acting on the advice thus tendered by "the member for Rochdale."

Through the summer and autumn of 1850 the country flung itself into the new movement with energy, enthusiasm, and unanimity. But a

parliamentary policy requires a parliamentary party to carry it into effect, and the Tenant League had as yet no such party. The Irish representation of that time was but a miserable parody of reality. Elected in the dismal years of famine and insurrection, panic and despair—when the people recked as little who scrambled on the hustings as how the idle breezes blew—the Irish members of 1850 represented little more than the personal views and interests of the individuals themselves. The cowering reaction, the political prostration, that followed the fever of 1848, was sadly reflected in their array. It was by accident that the League could reckon on the support of even half a dozen men of genuine earnestness and sincerity amongst them. The only hope of that organisation was that by efficient agitation they might create a public opinion which would at the next opportunity send to Parliament men of ability and integrity devoted to the tenant's cause. The Irish Liberal members, such as they were, regarded the Land League with no great favour. It was plainly calculated to put them in a dilemma. They believed in attaching themselves to the official Liberals of Westminster regions; to the powers who dispensed patronage

and pay, emoluments, titles, and distinctions. To serve Lord John Russell, to obey his whips, until some day a governorship of the Leeward Islands or an embassy to Timbuctoo might reward his patriotism, was the great aim and purpose of an Irish Liberal member in those days. But these troublesome tenant-right fellows were going on lines which were incompatible with this. The tenant-right demands were not favoured by the Government; were likely to be opposed by Lord John. What was an Irish Liberal to do? Break with the ministry, and lose all chance of a place—or reject the tenant-right shibboleth, and lose all chance of re-election? The resolution taken by most men of this type was to "trim"; to hold with the tenant-righters as far as was judiciously requisite; but to break with the Treasury bench on no account.

There were men in the ranks of the League who saw all this; who accurately measured and weighed the worth of adhesion on the part of such public representatives; and who rightly judged that the real danger and weakness of the popular movement would begin when they affected to embrace it.

Out of the intense earnestness of the Leaguers

—their soul-felt conviction that they were fighting a life and death struggle for the Irish race—grew the policy or doctrine known in recent Irish politics as "Independent Opposition." It declared that so momentous was this issue, all others for the time must give way to it; and that to every ministry who refused or hesitated to settle a question so vital for Ireland, uncompromising opposition should be given by Irish members. This doctrine made its appearance in 1851. It was the teaching of what were called "extreme" tenant-righters, and was not liked at all by the old-school politicians. The idea of Irish Catholic and Liberal members acting with the Tory opposition under any conceivable circumstances was too startling a novelty for them. Dr. Cooke was not more alarmed by the vision of Presbyterian ministers co-operating with Popish priests. Nevertheless, so thoroughly did the public judgment eventually approve the proposition, that it became an article of the national faith.

As in a distant mountain tarn or valley stream we find the source of some great river which divides nation from nation, so here we have the first appearance in Anglo-Irish politics of a

policy which even at the present day separates the Irish popular representation in Parliament from imperial parties. Hitherto the policy and practice of that body had been to attach themselves to and form a portion of the general "Liberal party" in the House of Commons. The Tories were regarded as the "natural enemies" of Catholic Irishmen; the Whigs their only possible protectors; albeit these patrons exhibited betimes a rather contumelious regard for their Irish auxiliaries. But now—*salus populi, suprema lex*—nothing that Whigs or Tories could do, short of saving the people from destruction, was to determine the support or assistance of Irish representatives.

While the Presbyterian North and Catholic South were thus clasping hands, and marching on side by side, there burst upon Ireland a storm in which they were to be hopelessly sundered. On the 4th of November 1850, Lord John Russell, the Liberal Premier, issued his celebrated "Durham Letter." The organisation of the Catholic Church in England had just been restored to its parochial and diocesan form. The prelates, in place of being "bishops *in partibus infidelium*," were to be bishops of the districts actually under

their charge; Westminster, Nottingham, Liverpool, or Southwark, as the case might be. "Any one can stir up England with the Pope" used to be said in joke. It was now proved to be a fact in good earnest. The idea got abroad that in some way or another this arrangement would derogate from the Queen's authority, and overthrow the national liberties. "Brass money and wooden shoes" were to be brought back. The Pope was to be installed at Windsor; and the worst days of "Bloody Mary" would return. This, no doubt, was the sensitiveness, the exaggerated sensitiveness, of a Protestant nation alarmed by anything that looked like the re-imposition of a spiritual authority it had thrown off. In the panic of the moment Englishmen totally overlooked the fact which subsequently so embarrassed them, that in Ireland this same parochial and diocesan system already prevailed—had never been given up. The Most Rev. Dr. Murray, the Catholic Archbishop of Dublin, had been addressed by that title in official Government communications, and as such was received at court; yet no one had ever discovered that Queen Victoria was in danger, or the fabric of British power shaken to its base. When nations

and peoples are moved by panic or alarm, there is an end for the time to reasoning. There were men in England—some of its leading statesmen—who realised the absurdity and consequent mischief of this "No Popery" cry, and who foresaw that in a few years their country, ashamed of its foolish fears and undignified passion, would be undoing what it now was rushing to do. There were others who "went with the stream"; who saw that from the palace to the cottage the conviction had spread that this was "papal aggression," and must at all hazards be resisted and punished. The Premier, the leader of the Liberal party, in a letter to the Bishop of Durham, gave the signal for war, and instantly there broke forth all over the land such a storm of religious fury and strife as had not been known since the days of the Lord George Gordon Riots. Protestant and Catholic drew apart—scowled and glowered at each other; lifelong friendships were snapped; neighbour was arrayed against neighbour; each side imputed the most desperate designs to the other, and "To your tents, O Israel!" became the cry on all hands.

Here was a fatal trial for the Tenant League—a cruel blow to the new companionship of

Protestant and Catholic Irishmen in effort for the common good.

Parliament opened on the 4th of February 1851. Two days subsequently Lord John Russell introduced the Ecclesiastical Titles Bill, rendering the assumption of territorial titles by the Catholic bishops illegal, and punishable with heavy penalties. On the 14th the Government were unable to command a majority of more than fourteen votes on a hostile motion by Mr. Disraeli,* and a "ministerial crisis" ensued. After no less than five ineffectual attempts to form a new ministry, the Whigs returned to office in the first week of March. In the ensuing session the Ecclesiastical Titles Bill was passed into law. During the whole of that year it was the one subject which occupied the public mind. When the Parliament came to enact punishment for the new arrangement in England, it was confronted by the awkward fact that such "ecclesiastical titles" had always existed, and

* "That the severe distress which continues to exist in the United Kingdom among that important class of her Majesty's subjects the owners and occupiers of land, and which is justly lamented in her Majesty's speech, renders it the duty of ministers to introduce without delay such measures as may be most effectual for the relief thereof." Ayes, 267; noes, 281.

had been always recognised, on the western side of St. George's Channel. What was to be done? The Act of Union fused the Irish and English Protestant Churches into one indivisible and indissoluble body—"The United Church of England and Ireland." If it was an "aggression" on this Church to have a Catholic bishop of Liverpool, so must it be to have a Catholic bishop of Cork. Yet what had the latter dignitary done that he should now be punished for using his lawful and accustomed designation? What had the Catholics of Ireland done to draw down upon them this penal law? The dilemma was not pleasant for English legislators; but they were not in a mood to stop at trifles—they extended the act to Ireland!

The Catholic leaders in the tenant-right movement saw with grief that an issue had arisen which would surely dominate the Land question, and would split North from South; yet throughout all this time they manfully held on to the platform on which Protestant and Catholic had vowed to unite. On Friday, the 20th of February 1852, the Whig ministry were defeated by a majority of eleven on their Militia Bill. Lord Derby took office as head of a Tory administration, and announced that Par-

liament would be dissolved in the approaching summer.

The news was wildly welcomed in Ireland. Here was the opportunity for the League—the general election for which they had so long prayed and waited! With a fierce energy the tenant-righters flung themselves into the struggle. Since 1829 no such desperate efforts had been put forth. All the earthly hopes of the Irish people seemed fixed on the return of an honest and independent Irish party to Parliament, so that the work of "the Crowbar Brigade" might be arrested, and tenant homesteads be saved from confiscation and ruin. There was no "vote by ballot" then; and the hapless tenant who went against the landlord's candidate dared certain doom. As it turned out, a civil war could scarcely have brought heavier penalties on the people than those which followed upon this general election of 1852.

At the close of the polls some fifty tenant-right members—men professing allegiance to the principles of the League, and elected on such professions—were seated for Irish constituencies. In the first flush of popular joy and triumph over this result, no one ventured to sift the so-called gains

and speculate how many of these men were sincere, and how many had shouted with the people only to betray their confidence. A goodly stride, however, had undoubtedly been taken towards reforming the *personnel* of the Irish popular representation. Amongst the men who entered Parliament for the first time on this occasion were the two to whose genius and abilities, fidelity and devotion, the League was most largely indebted—Charles Gavan Duffy and Frederick Lucas. With them there also appeared John Francis Maguire, Patrick M'Mahon, Tristram Kennedy, Richard Swift, John Brady, and others whose names have since become more or less familiar in Irish politics. A Liberal-Conservative, who had previously sat for Harwich, was returned for the borough of Youghal, and is thus referred to in the *Nation* of the 17th of July 1852:—

> In Youghal, Isaac Butt, the Irishman, has beaten Fortescue, the son of an English Whip peer. We are delighted that Mr. Butt sits in an Irish seat. Though he be a Conservative, his heart is genuinely Irish, and as a man of noble talents he is an honour to his country.

All over the island there was rejoicing. Ireland, turning from theories of physical force and insurrection, was now to see what constitutional effort

could do. In August 1852 the tenant-right movement was at the zenith of its power. How it fell, how it was overthrown, can best be told in the story which traces the romantic and tragic career of John Sadleir.

CHAPTER XIV.

"THE BRASS BAND."

THE destruction of the popular movement of 1850–1852, completing as it did the overthrow of popular confidence in constitutional politics, led to consequences utterly deplorable. Indissolubly associated in the gloomy memories of that time are the names of John Sadleir and William Keogh.

John Sadleir was born in Tipperary some sixty years ago. Amongst the few Catholic families of position in that county, the Scullys and the Sadleirs held a good place, the first-named especially, and in the last generation the two had been linked by marriage. At an early age young John was apprenticed to a solicitor, and in due time entered upon practice in that branch of the law. He was early distinguished for abilities even beyond those called forth in his profession,

and for an ambition that could not fail to lead him eventually to some high position. He decided to make for the great metropolis, where a wide field was open to such talents as he commanded. In London he pursued the special avocation of "parliamentary agent," and what with his Irish connection and his masterly skill, he rose rapidly. He soon soared higher and entered the circles of finance; his clear vision had discerned a road to results it would have seemed madness just then to mention. His family—the Sadleirs and Scullys and Keatinges—were moneyed men, and were widely known as such throughout his native county. Seeing what he could do with money in the great world of London, and well knowing that the Irish banking systems had not yet been brought to the doors of the people so as to tap the humble hoards of the farming classes, he determined to set up a local bank; and so the "Tipperary Joint-Stock Bank" was established. It became a great success. Wherever a branch was set up it supplanted that venerable institution the "old stocking" as a receptacle for savings or depository of marriage portions. From the Shannon to the Suir, "Sadleir's bank" was regarded with as much confidence as "the old lady of Threadneedle

Street" commands from her votaries. Yet from what I could ever learn, it performed only half the functions of a bank. It received all; it lent little. John, in fact, had other use for the money in London beside lending it to Paddy Ryan to buy cattle, or Tom Dwyer to drain his land. He was rising hand over hand, among the highest and boldest of speculative financiers. The time came for a new step in his ambitious scheme. Public life was to play its part in his designs. The imperial Parliament was to supply him with an arena for distinction. Not only would he enter it, but, determined to become a power therein, he would surround himself with a family band, as the nucleus of a party of which he should be leader. Amidst the gloom of the famine years he found the opportunity for effecting this portion of his scheme. In the general election of 1847 he was returned for the borough of Carlow; his cousin Robert Keatinge for Waterford county; and his cousin Frank Scully for Tipperary. In 1850 he occupied an enviable position. The repute of his wealth, the extent of his influence, above all, the worship of his success, was on every lip. Whatever he took in hand succeeded; whatever he touched turned to gold. He was, every

one said, one of your eminently practical politicians; no mere agitator, but a man of sagacity and prudence, whose name alone guaranteed the soundness of a scheme or the wisdom of a suggestion. He was a decided Liberal and an ardent Catholic, and very soon made his mark among the Irish members.

Side by side with him, in the same year, there entered Parliament, for the borough of Athlone, a man equally remarkable in his own way—Mr. William Keogh. Although some mysterious affinity seemed to bring the men together, and linked them in a joint career, they were dissimilar as possible in many respects. Mr. Keogh was a barrister-at-law, but, unlike Sadleir, had been no success at his profession—though not for want of splendid abilities. The one man was a model of financial punctuality and business exactness; the other certainly was not. Mr. Sadleir was a man of few words, strict and stern, reserved, and almost sententious; Mr. Keogh was the life and soul of every circle in which he moved, ever brimming over with animal spirits, full of *bonhomie*, sparkling with wit, and abounding with jovial good-nature. He was a most persuasive speaker. His voice was rich, powerful, and capable of every

inflection. His manner was intensely earnest. His social qualities, his intellectual gifts, made him a universal favourite; yet from the very first, despite his emotional patriotism and captivating eloquence, there were people who doubted his political sincerity. His whole position and circumstances, to their minds, too obviously suggested that the prize of public life for him must be some gift from the hand of the Government adequate as the price of such a convert.

The outburst of the "Papal Aggression" storm in England was hailed with very different feelings by the Sadleir group and by the Tenant League leaders. The latter had just built up a platform of united action for Protestant and Catholic Irishmen, and here had this fatal issue come to rend them asunder. The former saw with joy that in this new agitation, which bade fair to extinguish the League, they could get the country completely into their own hands. England went wild with "No Popery" fanaticism; Ireland was aflame with alarm and passion. Protestant and Catholic were daily becoming more and more hopelessly antagonised. The Catholics in the Tenant League strove manfully to make head against the current. A proposition to establish a

"Catholic Defence Association" was openly opposed by Duffy in the *Nation*. In the flames of religious bigotry, he said, the hopes of Ireland would perish. Knaves and hypocrites, he declared, would rant and rave as tremendous Catholics, and lash the multitude into madness about "Our holy Church," in order that they might effect the destruction of a popular movement which threatened to sweep away speculative politicians. We shall not serve the Church the more, he prophesied, but we shall lose the Land. He pleaded in vain. Challenged as the Irish Catholics were by the penal legislation of Lord John Russell's Ecclesiastical Titles Bill, it was not in human nature to lie still and take no measures for defensive warfare. John Sadleir and his party sprang into the front rank of the Catholic defence movement. The Ecclesiastical Titles Bill was encountered with the most determined opposition. "The Pope's Brass Band," the English press called the score of Irish Liberals who fought the bill so vehemently; "the Irish Brigade" they were proudly and fondly designated at home. Their conduct was the theme of praise by Irish Catholic firesides. Blessings were invoked on those devoted and heroic men, the brave defenders of

the Catholic religion; but, above all, benedictions were showered on the most defiant and dauntless, the most able and eloquent of the band—Mr. William Keogh.

The obnoxious bill was passed. The "Brigade" returned home to receive a nation's gratitude. A worthless array, verily, were they, for the most part. Some few, unquestionably, were men of high principle and sterling honesty; others were mere political hacks, sordid and selfish; while the Sadleir group, skilful, eloquent, influential, now virtually masters of the situation, were playing a bold and ambitious game.

On Tuesday, 23rd of August 1851, an aggregate meeting of the Catholics of Great Britain and Ireland was held in the Rotunda, Dublin, to protest against the Titles Bill, and to take measures for Catholic defence. The Most Rev. Dr. Cullen, at that time Archbishop of Armagh, filled the chair. There was a great array of Catholic bishops and clergy, as well as of Catholic noblemen and members of Parliament. Mr. John Sadleir, M.P., was one of the honorary secretaries to the meeting; his cousin Mr. Vincent Scully was one of the speakers, and Mr. W. Keogh, M.P., was another. The latter gentleman delighted the

assemblage by his eloquent denunciation of the Penal Act, which had just received the royal assent. He, for one, would trample on and defy the law. He drew from his pocket a copy of the new statute, and, holding it forth, said, "I now, as one of her Majesty's counsel, holding the act of Parliament in my hand, unhesitatingly give his proper title to the Lord Archbishop of Armagh." He then went on to promise that he and his friends would have the hostile act repealed if the people of Ireland would but send them a few more parliamentary colleagues. "We will have no terms," said he, "with any minister, no matter who he may be, until he repeals that act of Parliament, and every other which places the Roman Catholic on a lower platform than his Protestant fellow-subject."

Despite the marked favour which they had won from the Catholic prelates, clergy, and people, and notwithstanding the violence of their protestations, Messrs. Sadleir and Keogh were the objects of suspicion and mistrust on the part of a few keen observers of passing affairs in Ireland. It was noted that Lord Aberdeen, Sir James Graham, Mr. Sidney Herbert, Mr. Cardwell, and many leading Peelites had resisted the "No Popery" scare

in England, and had fought against the Titles Bill in Parliament. Amongst these statesmen, accurately enough, some persons saw a possible cabinet of the future, and already some idea that the Sadleir group were operating in view of such a contingency was whispered about. A base calumny, a cruel suspicion, an assassin stab, Mr. Keogh proclaimed it to be. The three leading popular journalists of Ireland—Mr. Duffy, of the *Nation*; Dr. Gray, of the *Freeman*; and Mr. Lucas, of the *Tablet*—were very plainly imbued with some such conviction, and between them and the Sadleir party a deadly dislike smouldered. The latter, however, were the popular idols of the hour. On the 28th of October 1851, Mr. Keogh was entertained by his constituents at a public banquet, which partook rather of the character of a national demonstration. No hall in Athlone was large enough to accommodate the gathering, which was held in a huge pavilion, erected, I believe, on the cathedral grounds. The guest of the evening, after an effusive eulogium on Archbishop MacHale, who was present, alluded to the insinuations above referred to. In language the earnestness and solemnity of which touched every heart he repelled them. "Whigs or Tories," said he, "Peelites

or Protectionists, are all the same to me. I will fight for my religion and my country, scorning and defying calumny. I declare, in the most solemn manner, before this august assembly, I shall not regard any party. I know that the road I take does not lead to preferment. I do not belong to the Whigs; I do not belong to the Tories. Here, in the presence of my constituents and my country—and I hope I am not so base a man as to make an avowal which could be contradicted to-morrow if I was capable of doing that which is insinuated against me—I solemnly declare if there was a Peelite administration in office to-morrow it would be nothing to me. I will not support any party which does not make it the first ingredient of their political existence to repeal the Ecclesiastical Titles Act." In like solemn manner he pledged his troth that he would oppose, or not support, any party which did not undertake to settle the Land question and abolish the Established Church. Finally, he turned at the Irish landlords, whom he denounced as "a heartless aristocracy"—"the most heartless, the most thriftless, and the most indefensible landocracy on the face of the earth."

Those who were present say that no one who

heard the speaker, and looked into his face, as, glowing with indignation, he made these protestations, could have been so unfeeling as to doubt him. Doubted, nay, openly denounced, he and the rest of the Sadleir following nevertheless were in the *Nation* and *Tablet*; Duffy and Lucas having thus early received some private proofs that the Brigade meant to be in the market on the first favourable opportunity. Early in 1852 a vacancy occurred in Cork county, and another of Mr. Sadleir's cousins, Mr. V. Scully, appeared as a candidate. The more honest and keen-sighted of the Tenant League party in the locality did not take very kindly to him, but Mr. Keogh went down specially to campaign for him, and the full strength of the Sadleir party was put forth. There was a public meeting in Cork city on the 8th of March 1852, to consider the merits of the Liberal candidates, and Mr. McCarthy Downing—whose public influence, in at all events the West Riding, was admitted to be paramount—seeing Mr. Keogh present, boldly "belled the cat" as follows :—

I will tell the meeting fairly and honestly that I believe the Irish Brigade are not sincere advocates of the tenant-right question. I state that, and I believe it is in the presence of

two of them. I attended two great meetings in the Music Hall in Dublin, at the inauguration of the Tenant League, at my own expense, when a deputation waited upon the Brigade to attend the meeting, and I protest I never saw a beast drawn to the slaughter-house by the butcher to receive the knife with more difficulty than there was in bringing to that meeting the members of the Irish Brigade.

Then up rose Mr. Keogh; and never, perhaps, were his marvellous gifts more requisite than at this critical moment. The future fate and fortunes of his leader and party hung on the turn affairs might take at this meeting; an open challenge and public charge having been thus flung down against them. There were a few hostile cries when he stood up; but silence was after a while obtained. With flushed countenance and heaving breast, he burst forth in these words:—

"Great God!" he exclaimed, "in this assemblage of Irishmen have you found that those who are most ready to take every pledge have been the most sincere in perseverance to the end, or have you not rather seen that they who, like myself, went into Parliament perfectly unpledged, not supported by the popular voice, but in the face of popular acclaim, when the time for trial comes are not found wanting? I declared myself in the presence of the bishops

of Ireland, and of my colleagues in Parliament, that let the minister of the day be who he may—let him be the Earl of Derby, let him be Sir James Graham, or Lord John Russell—it was all the same to us, and so help me God, no matter who the minister may be, no matter who the party in power may be, I will support neither that minister nor that party, unless he comes into power prepared to carry the measures which universal popular Ireland demands. I have abandoned my own profession to join in cementing and forming an Irish parliamentary party. That has been my ambition. It may be a base one, I think it an honourable one. I have seconded the proposition of Mr. Sharman Crawford in the House of Commons. I have met the minister upon it to the utmost extent of my limited abilities, at a moment when disunion was not expected. So help me God! upon that and every other question to which I have given my adhesion, I will be—and I know I may say that every one of my friends is as determined as myself—an unflinching, undeviating, unalterable supporter of it."

No wonder the assemblage that had listened as if spellbound while he spoke, sprang to their

feet, and with vociferous cheering atoned for the previous doubts of the man whose oath had now sealed his public principles. Alas! barely nine months later on he went over bodily to the minister of the day, and took office under an administration which neither repealed the Titles Act, abolished the Established Church, nor settled the Land question!

John Sadleir had marked well the power wielded against him by Duffy, Gray, and Lucas in the metropolitan press. The opposition of the *Nation*, the *Freeman*, and the *Tablet* alone seemed to stand between him and the complete command of Irish popular politics. The Catholic bishops, almost to a man, and the great majority of the priests, believed confidently in him and Mr. Keogh, and regarded the suggested suspicions or open imputations of the *Nation* and *Tablet* as the mischievous hostility of extreme and violent politicians. Still, it was highly dangerous for him to go forward with these three fortresses unreduced on his flank. He determined to silence them effectually; to destroy them. By this time he had become almost a millionaire. Fifty thousand pounds flung boldly into the establishment of opposition journals would soon dispose of

the *Nation*, *Tablet*, and *Freeman*. Ere long Dublin rang with the news that a gigantic newspaper scheme was being launched, "regardless of expense," by Mr. Sadleir. The leader of the Irish Brigade, the Defender of the Church, the man of success, had now decided to break ground in a new direction, and establish a real, genuine, orthodox Catholic press for the million. Commodious premises were taken; powerful machinery and extensive plant were purchased; and an editor, who was given out to be a sort of lay pontiff, Mr. William Bernard MacCabe, was brought over from London. The new weekly, called the *Weekly Telegraph*, was first to clear the ground of the *Nation* and *Tablet*, before the new daily tackled the *Freeman*. Perhaps ere that time Dr. Gray, intimidated by the beggary brought on Duffy and Lucas, would knock under to the great power of Sadleirism. If not, he too could be mopped out.

Never was there a more daring and comprehensive design to bring the whole popular opinion and political influence of a country into the grasp of one bold and ambitious man!

The *Telegraph* was issued at half the price of the existing Catholic weeklies—threepence; and as money was literally lavished on its production

and dissemination, it went broadcast through the land. It pandered to the fiercest bigotry. Its "catholicity" was of that bellicose and extravagant character which was deemed best calculated at a time of such widespread religious animosities to delight and excite the masses. It swept the island. It penetrated into hamlets and homes where the *Nation* or the *Tablet* had never been seen. The editor, a gentleman of great ability, contrived to make his readers believe that the Pope and John Sadleir were the two great authorities of the Catholic Church; one was its infallible head, the other its invincible defender. But those bad Catholics, Duffy and Lucas, were thwarting the noble efforts of Mr. Sadleir and his devoted colleagues to serve the Church; as for Gray, of the *Freeman*, he was a heretic, and nothing but evil could emanate from him. The newspaper move of the banker-politician, however, was a little over-reaching. It set a great many persons a-thinking, and alarmed not a few. As for the *Nation* and *Tablet*, they bore the shock of attack bravely in spirit, but neither proprietor had a bank at his back, and both journals were almost fatally crippled in the unequal struggle.

In the spring of 1852—on the 2nd of April—the Most Rev. Dr. Cullen, for a short time previously Archbishop of Armagh, was, by the all but unanimous vote of the clergy, nominated for the archbishopric of Dublin. The nomination was cordially approved at Rome, and there entered on his new sphere of duties a man who has ever since played an important part in Irish affairs. He had spent the greater part of his clerical life in Italy, and for many years had been Rector of the Irish college in Rome. He early gained the special confidence and favour of Cardinal Barnabo, Prefect of the Propaganda, and was very warmly esteemed by Pio Nono himself. His manhood was largely passed, his principles were formed, in an atmosphere quite unlike that of Ireland. In Italy popular politics and national aspirations were made synonymous with principles and designs very naturally abhorrent to him. All the bent of his mind was with authority, and against resistance to the constituted powers. He had seen the evil work which revolutionism had wrought elsewhere, and there was but the one safe road, he thought, for him to take; namely, to beware of all who inclined to tumult, violence, or sedition, and to side with those who put the interests of the Catholic religion

before and beyond every other. There never entered upon the duties of such an important position as his a man more single-minded, more devoid of personal ambition or thought of self, more wholly wrapped in the one great purpose of advancing the interests of religion. He was a strict disciplinarian, and it soon became evident that he had been chosen at Rome for a great and far-reaching purpose of disciplinary transformation in Irish Catholic affairs. Self-denying himself, he expected self-denial from all who served the altar; obedient, full of reverence for authority, he considered obedience the first duty of a cleric. He might have been one of the early Fathers, transferred from the fifth to the nineteenth century. His grave exterior, his passionless manner, his strong ideas of authority and discipline, did not fit well the Irish character, customs, and habits. He was more Roman than Irish, and his design of bringing the Irish Church into stricter conformity to the Roman model necessarily invaded many old feelings and incurred for him not a few conflicts amongst the Irish clergy. "A gloomy fanatic," "a narrow-minded churchman," the ultra-Protestant journals early declared him to be; and even

his own people, owing to the calm gravity of his manner, and the austerity of his piety, regarded him more with veneration than familiar affection. Yet in all this only one side of his character was read, and justice was not done his inner nature, which was kindly, and often generous. He could unbend betimes, and few could exhibit a readier appreciation for genuine wit or humour.* Yet a certain air of

* Many stories circulate in Dublin, some of questionable authenticity, as to his adventures in those early reforming days. He resided for some time with the parochial clergy in the presbytery attached to the pro-cathedral in Marlborough Street. He soon established a rule that every one not on sick visitation duty should be within doors by ten o'clock at night. The ten o'clock rule was by degrees a little infringed, whenever the curates were spending, as was their wont, an evening with some friendly family in the neighbourhood. The archbishop imagined he occasionally heard footsteps creeping cautiously upstairs long after "ten o'clock," and one evening, to the consternation of the reverend father whose turn it was to lock up, he announced his intention of performing this duty himself. "Go up to bed, Father John," said he, in tones of sympathy; "you look a little fatigued. I'll wait for whoever is out." In vain Father John declared he was not tired; in fact he felt quite fresh, so to speak, and waiting up a little would do him all the good in the world. The archbishop would have his way; and Father John went off to his room muttering of the catastrophe that awaited two of his friends who were sure not to be in before eleven. It was past this hour when they tapped softly at the big door, which was

reserve and monasticism always surrounded him; and one could see that he looked out on all the world from the standpoint of an ecclesiastic.

Dr. Cullen almost inevitably gravitated towards the Sadleir party as the special champions of the Church, and away from those who looked to such a dangerous paper as the *Nation* for guidance. He knew what "Young Italy" meant; and "Young Ireland" he believed to be an imitation of the Italian party. Nor was he without grounds for such an impression. The writers in the *Nation* at one time warmly wrote up Mazzini and his co-labourers of the Carbonari; a position, however, soon after publicly and emphatically abandoned by Mr. Duffy, and repudiated by his successors. Still, it was not difficult for Mr. Sadleir's ecclesiastical friends to persuade the new archbishop that the men who preferred a Tenant League to a Catholic Defence

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cautiously opened from within. One of them, putting in his head, inquired in a whisper—"Is Paul in bed?" "No," said the archbishop in a similar whisper, "he's here." Laughing heartily at their confusion he let them in, locked the door, and, wishing them good-night, told them to go to bed. To their amazement, the archbishop next morning acted as if the incident had never occurred; and when at length the story got about none enjoyed it more mirthfully than he did.

Association, and who advocated a union of Protestants and Catholics in public affairs, were the heterodox party; while Messrs. Sadleir and Keogh were the friends of order and the defenders of religion. In the events which were now at hand, this attitude of the Catholic archbishop of Dublin was of marked importance.

Parliament was dissolved on the 1st of July, and the efforts of the past six months culminated on the hustings. There were four parties engaged in the combat: the Tories—who fought "solid," as they always do; the Whigs; the Tenant Leaguers, and the Catholic Defenders. In several places the latter two came into open conflict; and generally it was evident that the Whigs, the Catholic Defence people, and the Brigade men were one and the same party. Nevertheless, when the lists were closed, it was found that the Leaguers had virtually carried the island. No Catholic Defence Whig was able to secure his return without taking the Tenant-Right pledge; while in nearly every place the League candidates triumphed. Their only important defeat was in Monaghan, where Dr. Gray was narrowly beaten. Frederick Lucas was returned for Meath, Gavan Duffy for New Ross, John

Francis Maguire for Dungarvan, and, above all in importance, George Henry Moore, a member of the dissolved Parliament, already marked out as a master of men in the popular ranks, was again elected for Mayo. On the other hand, Mr. Sadleir and his three cousins, Frank and Vincent Scully and Robert Keatinge, were re-elected; so was Mr. Keogh; and Mr. Sadleir's brother James came in for Tipperary; all finding it requisite to hoist the Tenant-Right colours beside the misused papal banner which they waved in the people's eyes. It was in the course of this campaign that Mr. Keogh, addressing a mob in Westmeath, in the interest of his friend Captain Magan, delivered a speech containing at least one suggestion which listening Ribbonmen were not likely to forget. "Boys," said he, "the days are now long, and the nights are short. In winter the days will be short and the nights will be long; and then let every one remember who voted for Sir Richard Levinge."*

But though Mr. Keogh was the man who

* Mr. Keogh subsequently declared he had no recollection whatever of this; and a special friend of his was adduced who "did not hear it"; but several affidavits or declarations were quoted by Lord Eglintoun from persons who were present and heard the words.

figured most before the public, the unseen Von Moltke of the whole scheme was John Sadleir. Already he saw victory at hand. The result of the general elections gave a narrow majority to the Liberal party. The Tories could not hold office. The Russell Whigs, without the Irish vote, were equally powerless. A coalition ministry—embracing the Peelite Conservatives and anti-Ecclesiastical Titles Bill Liberals—was the only possible administration. Already in imagination the banker-politician grasped a coronet as the price of the Irish Brigade!

In Ireland the joy of the people over the return of so large an array of Tenant-Right members was unbounded. It was, for Gavan Duffy, especially, a short-lived triumph over his assailants of the revolutionary school. A faithful and independent band of representatives, he declared, would be worth more to Ireland in her existing condition than armies in the tented field. It did seem as if the Irish people had settled down at last to the design of fighting out their political issues with the weapons of the franchise and the forces of public opinion.

On Wednesday, 8th of September 1852, a general conference of Irish members of Parliament favour-

able to tenant-right, convened by the League, was held in Dublin. Every Liberal member sitting for an Irish seat, with one or two exceptions, was present; forty in all. The following resolution as the basis of their future parliamentary policy and action was adopted with but one* dissentient voice:—

Resolved; that in the opinion of this conference it is essential to the proper management of this cause that the members of Parliament who have been returned on tenant-right principles should hold themselves perfectly independent of, and in opposition to, all Governments which do not make it part of their policy, and a Cabinet question, to give to the tenantry of Ireland a measure embodying the principles of Mr. Sharman Crawford's bill.

On the 4th of November 1852, the new Parliament opened. At 4 a.m., Friday, 17th of December, the Derby Government was defeated in the Commons by a majority of nineteen. On the 20th ministers resigned, and Lord Aberdeen was called upon to form a Cabinet.

A shout went up from Ireland. A thrill of the wildest excitement shook the island from the centre to the sea. Now joy and triumph—now torturing doubt—now the very agony of

* Mr. Burke Roche, afterwards Lord Fermoy.

suspense, prevailed. What would the Irish party do? Here was the crisis which was to shame their oaths or prove them true. No Liberal or composite administration was possible without them, and their demand was one no minister had ever denied to be just. What would the Irish members do? The fate of the new ministry, the fate of Ireland, was in their hands.

As terrible deeds are said to be sometimes preceded by a mysterious apprehension, so in the last week of that old year a vague gloom chilled every heart. The news from London was panted for, hour by hour. At length the blow fell. Tidings of treason and disaster came. The Brigade was sold to Lord Aberdeen! John Sadleir was Lord of the Treasury! William Keogh was Irish Solicitor-General! Edmond O'Flaherty was Commissioner of Income-Tax! And so on.

The English people, fortunately accustomed for centuries to exercise the functions of political life, may well be unable to comprehend the paralysis which followed this blow in Ireland. The merchant of many ships may bear with composure the wreck of one. But here was an argosy freighted with the last and most precious

hopes of a people already on the verge of ruin and despair, scuttled before their eyes by the men who had called on the Most High God to witness their fidelity. The Irish tenantry had played their last stake, and lost. A despairing stupor like to that of the famine time shrouded the land. Notices to quit fell "like snow-flakes" all over the counties where the hapless farmers had "refused the landlord" and voted for a Brigadier. But the banker-politician had won. His accustomed success had attended him. He was not as yet a peer; but he was a Treasury Lord. From their seat on the Treasury bench, he and his comrade, "the Solicitor-General," could smile calmly at the accusing countenances of Duffy and Moore and Lucas. The New Year's chimes rang in the triumph of John Sadleir's daring ambition. Did no dismal minor tone, like mournful funeral knell, presage the sequel that was now so near at hand?

CHAPTER XV.

THE SUICIDE BANKER.

SIDE by side with the political movements and events that landed Mr. Sadleir on the Treasury bench, financial schemes of the most ambitious character had occupied his mind. He early noted how fortunes might be made out of the ruin of Irish landed proprietors in the Encumbered Estates Court. He got up a "Land Company" to purchase the properties just then being sold at from seven to thirteen years' rental, with a view to reselling them subsequently at the advance which he knew would take place. His connection with the Tipperary Bank brought him into association with the magnates of Lombard Street; and ere long he was Chairman of the London and County Joint-Stock Bank. Higher, still higher, grew his aims; bolder and more daring his schemes and speculations. He was in Italian, American, and Spanish railways. He was deep in iron; and at one time, it

is said, he owned every cargo of sugar in port or at sea between England and the Indies.

Amidst the hoarse roar of denunciation which hailed the desertion of the Brigade to Lord Aberdeen's camp, there came the bold assurances of the *Weekly Telegraph* that all was right. Nay, virtuous indignation was manifested at the injustice of condemning those gentlemen before their explanation had been heard. They were in no hurry to offer any; but substantially their story was this: "Lord Aberdeen has not repealed the Titles Act, nor undertaken to do so; but he is the Catholic's friend. He fought against the 'No Popery' penal legislators; he is on terms of respect and regard with our bishops. He has not passed a tenant-right bill, nor undertaken to do so; but he wishes the cause well, and will probably deal with the question. To oppose such a man we should act side by side with our deadly enemies, the Tories. His accession to power is the virtual defeat of Lord John Russell, who passed the Titles Bill, and of Lord Derby, who assisted it."

The Tenant League was rent in twain by the Sadleir defection. Not merely the League, the country at large, was split into fiercely hostile parties, one making the heavens resound with

execrations of the forsworn Brigadiers, the other as stormily defending them.

At this point of Irish political history, the political influence and authority of the Catholic bishops received a shock which has considerably influenced Irish affairs down to the present day.

Mr. Sadleir and Mr. Keogh had of course to present themselves for re-election in their boroughs of Carlow and Athlone. The Leaguers flung themselves with energy into the work of defeating them. In both places it was found that the Catholic prelates and clergy supported the Brigade leaders. This news created consternation. A deputation, consisting of Frederick Lucas, M.P., Geo. H. Moore, M.P., Rev. T. O'Shea, C.C., and Rev. Dr. Kearney, P.P., on the part of the Tenant League, proceeded to Carlow to oppose Mr. Sadleir. The local clergy denounced them as intruders, and they had to quit the town. It was still worse at Athlone, where every one was overjoyed at Mr. Keogh's good fortune. Stunned, alarmed at the probable effects of this approval of a disregard for public obligations, the League leaders appealed to the Catholic bishops and clergy of Ireland to speak out promptly, and say was it conducive to public morality that pledges so solemnly and explicitly

made to the people should be violated on the first opportunity with the sanction of Catholic ecclesiastics. From the Most Rev. Dr. MacHale, Archbishop of Tuam, came a ready and emphatic response. Standing as he did at the head of the Irish episcopacy in political weight and influence, it was not unnaturally expected that a pronouncement from "the Lion of the Fold of Judah," as O'Connell had designated him, would have been accepted as decisive. No Catholic prelate in Ireland had filled so large a place as he in Irish affairs for more than quarter of a century; none at all approached him in popularity. He had been fondly looked up to by the Irish Catholic millions as an episcopal O'Connell; a guide who was "always right," a champion whom nothing could dismay. He addressed a public letter to Mr. G. H. Moore, M.P., on the question of the day, "as a clear case of conscience which, when stripped of all other relations of policy, or expediency or private interest, or prophecies of increased good, or probabilities of qualified evil, with which it is sought to obscure and confound it, is too clear for debate or conflicting decisions." Then he went on to say:—

On the strict and religious obligation of fidelity to such covenants there can be no controversy—an obligation the

more sacred and binding in proportion to the numbers committed to such engagement, and to the magnitude and sacredness of the interests which they involve. Dissolve the binding power of such contracts, and you loosen the firmest bonds by which society is kept together.

The Catholic bishops of Meath and Killala expressed themselves to a like effect. But at the points of critical importance, in the boroughs where the rejection of the Brigade leaders might have had a telling effect on the controversy, it happened, fortunately for them, that the local bishops indorsed their course. This conflict between ecclesiastical authorities on a grave question of public morality greatly scandalised the people. Every one looked for a declaration from the new Archbishop of Dublin, the Papal Legate. None came. Soon his silence received a dark construction. His uncle, the Rev. James Maher, P.P., was one of Mr. Sadleir's strongest supporters in Carlow; and it became manifest that Dr. Cullen's influence, in Ireland and at Rome, was certain to be given, negatively or positively, on the side of Lord Aberdeen. This was partly his own judgment on things as they presented themselves to his view. But there was a whisper at the time of rather curious negotiations privately pushed between London, Vienna, and

Rome, as to the claims of the new Premier on "the Catholic vote" in the House of Commons; and these stories, rightly or wrongly, were connected with the attitude which Dr. Cullen assumed in the subsequent events. It seemed for a moment as if almost a schism would ensue in the Irish Catholic Church over the issue thus precipitated. An open war raged between the sections of the clergy and people who ranged themselves under the banners of Dr. MacHale and of Dr. Cullen respectively. The latter maintained a severe silence, but he might as well have openly espoused the cause of Mr. Sadleir and Mr. Keogh; for the *Tablet* and *Nation* treated him as the really formidable protector of those gentlemen. No more violent, no more painful, internecine conflict agitated Irish politics in the present century than that which arose out of this clerical and episcopal condonation and reprobation of the Keogh-Sadleir defection from the Tenant League.

Mr. Sadleir was opposed in Carlow by a Tory, Mr. Alexander. The *Freeman*, the *Nation*, and the *Tablet* exhorted the people to vote for Alexander, all Tory as he was, rather than for the new Lord of the Treasury. The *Weekly Telegraph* and the *Evening Post* cried out in horror against this

unholy union of Orange Tories and renegade Catholics in opposition to the *protégé* of the bishop, the favourite of the priests, the champion of the Pope, the bosom friend of Lord Aberdeen. After a severe contest, Mr. Sadleir was rejected by an adverse majority of six votes. In Athlone, however, Mr. Keogh was not only triumphant, but the Catholic bishop, Dr. Browne, ostentatiously identified himself with the laudable advancement of so good a son of the Church. Soon after a vacancy was found for the Lord of the Treasury in Sligo, where by shameless bribery and terrorism he headed the poll. A parliamentary committee said so it had been; but as Mr. Sadleir was held to have no personal knowledge of those crimes, his seat was secure.

In Ireland, centuries of a cruel penal code had kept Catholics from every post of prominence or distinction in the public administration. The Emancipation Act had, indeed, declared them no longer ineligible for such offices by reason of religious faith; but (as Mr. Peel at the time pointed out to some unnecessarily alarmed Protestants) declaring men not disqualified was one thing, actually appointing them was another. From 1829 to 1849 the Emancipation Act was little

more than an abstract declaration, for any substantial change that the people could see in the old *régime*. "Catholic appointments" came to be regarded as the great test of Government liberality. The placing of Catholics in important public offices, especially as judges on the bench, was looked upon as the practical application of the Emancipation Act; and the ministry who should make the act a reality would be ranked very nearly as highly as those who had enacted it as a theory. In Dublin, at Vienna, and at Rome, Lord Aberdeen, through able and astute Catholic intermediaries, pledged himself to this view; and unquestionably he meant it. What greater proof, it was asked, could he give of his feelings and intentions on this point than the fact of singling out for high positions under his administration the most prominent and demonstrative Irish opponents of the Titles Bill—the men whose ultra-Catholicism had rendered them most obnoxious to English Protestant prejudices?

This aspect of the transaction unquestionably impressed many of the Irish bishops irresistibly. And they persuaded themselves that, even on the tenant question, Lord Aberdeen's dispositions were likely to go beyond anything otherwise prac-

ticable. Moreover, the new political idea or rule of "independence of and opposition to *all* administrations" was too great and too sudden a change from the traditional alliance of the Irish popular party with the English Liberals. The Irish members had indeed "resolved" it at the conference, but not more than a third of their number really meant it. The wrench was too severe. On its very first application the new rule broke down. The popular mind had not been educated yet beyond the one point of always opposing the Tories, "who never gave Catholics anything!"

The League leaders, especially the League journalists, Duffy, Gray, and Lucas, denounced the idea that for the sake of "Catholics in office" the Land question, which involved interests of Protestants and Catholics alike, should be sacrificed. They held up to public odium and eternal reprobation every man, archbishop, bishop, priest, or layman, who directly or indirectly approved or sustained the Brigade treason. The "Sadleirite prelates," as they were offensively termed, struck back with hard and sharp blows. Too-demonstrative priests were removed to remote parishes, and even called upon to "abstain from political

strife." Eventually the leading provincial priests (chiefly from the diocese of Meath), accustomed to attend the meetings in Dublin whereat "the Brigade traitors" and their episcopal and other supporters were denounced, found themselves prohibited, by an order from Rome, from further participation in such demonstrations.

All this was set down mainly to Dr. Cullen's account. His voice was known to be all-powerful at the Propaganda. The parochial clergy took alarm. He was suspected of a deep design to overthrow the considerable independence which hitherto they enjoyed. It was said that "provincial statutes" had been forwarded by him for approval to Rome, whereby the platform utterances of a priest should be confined to his own parish. Hitherto in the selection of Catholic prelates the custom had been for the diocesan parish priests to select by ballot three persons—*dignus*, *dignior*, and *dignissimus*, according as they stood on the vote—whose names were forwarded to Rome, and one of whom almost invariably received the appointment. Dr. Cullen was credited with the purpose of abolishing this ancient custom, and of recommending the Holy See to assert its unquestionable right of nomination

independently of the parish priests.* A deep discontent spread throughout the island. At length it was decided to appeal to Rome against his proceedings.

This was a very serious, an almost unprecedented, course for Irish Catholics to take. An appeal to Rome against the Papal Legate! To complain of him that he was curbing with strong hand the political action of clerics! This was unlikely to be deemed an offence by the Vatican authorities. The intricacies of Irish politics, the tangled skein of the League-Brigade dispute, could hardly be unravelled and comprehended by such a tribunal. Nevertheless, well knowing it was one that never yet denied justice to the weakest or the humblest, even against the lofty and the strong, the aggrieved priests of the tenant-right movement drew up a formal Memorial or Complaint for presentation to the Pope.

But who would sign it? Who would present it? Who was in a position to prosecute it; to proceed to the Eternal City and there attend and await

* This change has, as a matter of fact, been ever since in a great measure applied. In several instances the nominations of the parochial clergy have been passed over, and the bishops directly appointed from Rome.

the myriad tedious stages and processes of investigation? After a good deal of time had been consumed by reason of these difficulties and obstructions, the Memorial was at length duly signed, and Mr. Lucas, M.P., editor of the *Tablet*, was chosen to proceed to Rome as the representative of the complainants before the Apostolic Chair. He went on a forlorn hope. He was kindly received. The grave impeachment which he brought was decreed a careful consideration. But the whole proceeding was a mournful mistake. Months went by. Weary waiting in Rome and despairing news from Ireland told heavily on the spirits and on the health of the loyal-hearted Lucas. He had to return to England, leaving the Memorial to its fate. When we heard that he lay ill at Staines, those who knew the man intimately and had marked the consuming anxiety with which he had fought out this quarrel felt that a great and noble heart had been broken in an unequal combat. The news from Ireland was simply this, that the Irish parliamentary party was a wreck; that the League was fatally shattered, the country utterly disheartened and despairing. The great movement around which the hopes of a nation had centred was irretrievably

ruined. The League organisation, indeed, refusing to surrender, made gallant effort for some few years further, and a small band of the Irish members, amongst the faithless faithful found—Gavan Duffy, G. H. Moore, P. M'Mahon, J. A. Blake, J. F. Maguire, Tristram Kennedy, John Brady, and others—fought bravely on. But it was more to make a stand for honour than with hope of victory. Mr. Sadleir had carried the day.

No sooner did Gavan Duffy realise that the Memorial to Rome was likely to come to naught than he determined to bid Ireland farewell. No man had staked more largely on the success of this movement; none lost more heavily by its overthrow. He, at all events, had cleared his soul; he had done his part. He had given to the service of Ireland the best years of his life, without avail. He would now call upon younger men, who might hope where he could not, to take his place, if they would; while, for himself, he sought a new home, and began life once more at five and thirty, in far Australia.

In 1854 there passed through Parliament the most statesmanlike scheme of British legislation for half a century—the act whereby the Australian

Colonies were granted Home Rule. Mr. Duffy took a deep interest and an active part in all the discussions on this important measure. He added to it some of its wisest provisions, and saved it from faults that might have seriously marred its success. Few imagined at the time that he was destined to be, ere long, engaged in practicably applying that scheme as First Minister of the Crown in free, self-governed Victoria!

For a moment it seemed as if he had been too precipitate in meditating self-expatriation. Towards the close of 1853 an ominous event occurred. The first faint sign of a fissure appeared in the edifice of Mr. Sadleir's political and financial fortunes!

In his unsuccessful attempt at re-election for Carlow borough he had used unscrupulously and illegally the resources of his bank (which had a branch in the town) and the mechanism of bills, bonds, debts, executions, and seizures, to influence the result. He usually took care to have a sufficient number of the electors in his power through some such means. On the morning of the election an unfortunate man named Dowling, suspected of an intention to vote for Mr. Alexander, was unlawfully arrested on some judg-

ment which Mr. Sadleir produced against him. Dowling brought an action for false imprisonment in the Court of Exchequer, Dublin, in November 1853. The revelations in the case were damning against the Lord of the Treasury. He came into the witness-box, however, and, as it was well expressed, "denied everything, and disowned everybody." So bold and desperate was his evidence that the jury had no option but to find against Dowling or declare Mr. Sadleir a perjurer. They disbelieved Mr. Sadleir, and gave Dowling a verdict! The sensation created in Dublin at the time by this event was considerable; hardly less serious was the excitement it caused in some of the political and financial circles of London. In a few weeks it became known that after such a verdict the lordship of the Treasury could not be retained. In January 1854 Mr. Sadleir "resigned."

Resigned! The tide had turned with the banker-politician, and, all unknown to the world, was now bearing him irresistibly to ruin.

In March a sinister rumour crept around, that Mr. Sadleir, so far from being a millionaire, was at the moment in financial difficulty. The story, however, was scoffed at, and received what seemed ample

refutation in new proofs displayed of his vast financial resources. In June people began to inquire in a cynical way, Where was Mr. Edmond O'Flaherty? Mr. O'Flaherty was the Brigadier who had been made Commissioner of Income-Tax; a peculiarly intimate friend, confidant, and political manager of Messrs. Sadleir and Keogh; another of those "good Catholics" whom it was so beneficial to Ireland to have placed in high office. Where was he, indeed? The authorities at Scotland Yard grew anxious on the point, when it was discovered one morning that the "Commissioner of Income-Tax" had fled to parts unknown, leaving bills in circulation, some of them with forged signatures, amounting in the aggregate to about £15,000.

Men stared in wonder, and asked, Who next? Mr. O'Flaherty's relations with other of the Brigade politicians suggested painful uncertainty as to further disclosures. He was a special *protégé* of the Duke of Newcastle, with whom he was on visiting terms. There is little doubt that he was the negotiator of the recent political transactions between his friends and the Aberdeen Government. And now he was a fugitive from justice!

Parliament opened on the 23rd of January 1855. Mr. Roebuck at once gave notice that he would move for a committee to inquire into the condition of the army before Sebastopol, and into the conduct of the Government departments responsible. On hearing this notice read, Lord John Russell withdrew from the ministry, and "upset the coach again." Six days subsequently, the 29th of January, the coalition administration was defeated on Mr. Roebuck's motion by the large majority of 157, in a house of 453. On the 1st of February Lord Aberdeen resigned. Between the 2nd and 5th Lord John Russell and Lord Derby had each in turn tried and failed to form a Cabinet. On the 6th Lord Palmerston became Premier, with a reconstruction of the late administration. Mr. Keogh had been Irish Solicitor-General; Mr. Brewster being Attorney-General. Of course it was concluded that their resignation of office would follow upon that of the Government. Mr. Brewster did so resign, under the belief that his junior colleague was doing the same; but he found that his act had merely made a vacancy for Mr. Keogh, who quietly held on, and stepped into the Attorney-Generalship. There was a story current in the Four Courts at the time that Mr. Keogh had cleverly

"sold" Mr. Brewster in the proceeding — had deliberately misled and outwitted him; but I never believed it, as the latter gentleman would, in any event, have acted on the strict lines of usage, and resigned with his chief.

On the 4th of August 1855, Mr. Gavan Duffy announced, by a farewell address in the *Nation*, that he was about to throw up his seat in Parliament and leave Ireland for ever! The news chilled the country like a signal of despair. Mr. Duffy's first idea, I believe, was that the whole staff of the *Nation* should accompany him, and that they should re-establish that journal under happier auspices in the southern hemisphere. But this project was abandoned. He found a few hearts who would hope and strive on at home, dismal as was the outlook then, in the belief that some day Ireland would come to life, and would arise once more. Mr. John Cashel Hoey, a long-time colleague and friend, who had served him with ability and fidelity, and whose brilliant gifts and dauntless courage had been amply tested in years of difficulty and struggle, stepped into Mr. Duffy's place as editor in chief; I succeeded to the second position, and Mr. M. Clery, a nobly honest and true-souled young Irishman, undertook the business manage-

ment of the property.* Mr. Duffy's valedictory address described in moving language the events of the past six years, and the present circumstances of Ireland. A change might come, he said—and that it might he fondly prayed; but unless and until the existing conditions altered, "there was no more hope for Ireland than for a corpse on the dissecting-table." Gloomy news came crowding in. On the 22nd of October Frederick Lucas died at Staines. On the 6th of November Gavan Duffy sailed for Australia. It seemed the extinction of national politics in Ireland.

I have said that in 1854 the tide had turned with John Sadleir. Alas! Throughout that year, and all the weary days of 1855, unknown to even his nearest and dearest friends, he was suffering tortures indescribable! Some of his colossal speculations had turned out adversely; and he had misappropriated the last shilling of the Tipperary Bank. Another venture, he thinks, may recoup all—it only leads to deeper ruin! He must go on: he cannot turn back now. But where are funds to be reached for further wild endeavours? All calmly as ever he trod the lobby of the House of

* Mr. Hoey and Mr. Clery retired in 1857, from which date up to 1876 I remained sole proprietor and responsible editor.

Commons. No eye could detect on that impassive countenance of his that there was aught but the satisfaction of success within. His political associates joked with him over Gavan Duffy's "political funeral." They effusively felicitated him on the signal overthrow and final dispersion of his adversaries. "Ireland is now all your own, John," said one of them; "you have conquered all along the line. You must be as happy as a king!" He smiled his cold sad smile, and said, Yes, to be sure he was. At home in Ireland his own journal, and all the Liberal Government organs, were never tired of sounding his praise and proclaiming his triumph over the dead Lucas and the exiled Duffy.

Nightly, after leaving the House of Commons, John Sadleir sat up late in the private study of his town house, 11 Glo'ster Terrace, Hyde Park. Morning often dawned and found him at his lonely labours. What were they?

In the stillness and secrecy of those midnight hours John Sadleir, the man of success, the millionaire, the Lord of the Treasury that had been, the peer of the realm that was to be, was occupied in forging deeds, conveyances, and bills for hundreds of thousands of pounds!

Still, accumulating disaster overpowered even these resources of fraud. In the second week of February 1856, some one of his numerous desperate financial expedients happened to miscarry for a day; and the drafts of the Tipperary Bank were dishonoured at Glyn's. The news came with a stunning shock on most people; but quickly, next day, an announcement was issued that it was all a mistake; the drafts presented anew had been duly met, and the mischance would not again befall. The alarm, however, had reached Ireland, and at several of the branches something akin to a run took place. If only a panic could be averted, and twenty or thirty thousand pounds obtained, all might be saved. So, at least, declared Mr. James Sadleir, M.P., who was in charge of affairs in Ireland, telegraphing to John on the morning of Saturday, 16th of February.* Twenty or thirty thousand pounds! Once it was a bagatelle in his estimation; but now! He had lain on no bed the night before. All haggard and excited this message found him. James little knew all when he

* "Feb. 16, 1856. Telegram from James Sadleir, 30 Merrion Square South, Dublin, to John Sadleir, Esq., M.P., Reform Club, London: All right at all the branches; only a few small things refused there. If from twenty to thirty thousand over here on Monday morning all is safe."

thus lightly spoke of twenty or thirty thousand pounds, by way of reassuring his hapless brother. The wretched man strove in vain to devise some yet unexhausted means of raising this money. He had already gone so far, so perilously far, that there was no possible quarter in which earnest application might not lead to suspicions that would invoke discovery! He drove into the city. Mr. Wilkinson, of Nicholas Lane, telling the sad affair subsequently, says: "He came to me on the morning of Saturday, and suggested that I could raise some money with the view of assisting the Tipperary Bank. He showed me some telegraphic messages he had received from Ireland on the subject of their wants. He had several schemes by which he thought I could assist him in raising money; but after going into them, I told him I could not help him, the schemes being such as I could not recommend or adopt. He then became very excited, put his hand to his head, and said, 'Good God, if the Tipperary Bank should fail the fault will be entirely mine, and I shall have been the ruin of hundreds and thousands.' He walked about the office in a very excited state, and urged me to try and help him, because, he said, he could not live to see the pain and ruin inflicted on others

by the cessation of the bank. The interview ended in this, that I was unable to assist him in his plans to raise money."

In this case, what he feared in so many others exactly occurred. Mr. Wilkinson had previously advanced him large sums, for which, to be sure, Mr. Sadleir, on request, had given security—one of those numerous title-deeds which he had fabricated during the past year. Mr. Wilkinson that same Saturday night despatched his partner, Mr. Stevens, to Dublin, to look after the matter. On Monday this gentleman found that the deed was a forgery. But by that time a still more dreadful tale was known to all the world.

There is reason to think John Sadleir knew of Mr. Stevens's start for Dublin before ten o'clock that evening. His intimate friend, Mr. Norris, solicitor, of Bedford Row, called on him about half-past ten, and remained half an hour. The fact was discussed between them that the Tipperary Bank must stop payment on Monday morning.

John Sadleir sat him down, all alone, in that study, and callous must be the heart that can contemplate him in that hour and not compassionate his agony. All was over; he must die. He was yet, indeed, in the prime and vigour

of manhood. "Considerably above the middle height," says one who knew him well, "his figure was youthful, but his face—that was indeed remarkable. Strongly marked, sallow, eyes and hair intensely black, and the lines of the mouth worn into deep channels." The busy schemes, the lofty ambitions, the daring speculations, were ended now. The poorest cottier on a Tipperary hillside might look the morrow in the face and cling to life; but for him, the envied man of thousands, the morning sun must rise in vain. He seized a pen, and devoted half an hour to letter-writing. Oh that woful correspondence of the despairing soul with those whom it loves, and is to lose for ever! Then he took a small silver tankard from the sideboard and put it in his breast pocket, beside a small phial which he had purchased early in that fatal day. As he passed through the hall and took his hat from the stand, he told the butler not to wait up for him. He went out, and closed the door behind him with a firm hand. The clocks were striking twelve; 'twas Sunday morning; God's holy day had come. Ah, far away on the Suir side were an aged father and mother, with whom a child he often trod the path to early mass, when Sunday bells were music to

his ear! And now!—oh fatal lure of wealth! oh damned, mocking fiend!—to this, to this it had come at last! He dare not think of God, or friend, or home——

Next morning, on a little mound on Hampstead Heath, the passers by noticed a gentleman stretched as if in sleep. A silver tankard had fallen from his hand and lay upon the ground. It smelt strongly of prussic acid. A crowd soon gathered; the police arrived; they lifted up the body, all stiff and stark. It was the corpse of John Sadleir, the banker.

On Monday the news flashed through the kingdom. There was alarm in London; there was wild panic in Ireland. The Tipperary Bank closed its doors. The country people flocked into the towns. They surrounded and attacked the branches. The poor victims imagined their money must be within, and they got crowbars, picks, and spades to force the walls and "dig it out." The scenes of mad despair which the streets of Thurles and Tipperary saw that day would melt a heart of adamant. Old men went about like maniacs, confused and hysterical; widows knelt in the street and, aloud, asked God was it true they were

beggared for ever. Even the poor-law unions, which had kept their accounts in the bank, lost all, and had not a shilling to buy the paupers' dinner the day the branch doors closed.

The letters which the unhappy suicide penned that Saturday night reveal much of the terrible story so long hidden from the world. The following was addressed to his cousin, Robert Keatinge:—

11 Glo'ster Terrace, 16 February 1856.

DEAR ROBERT,—To what infamy have I come step by step—heaping crime upon crime—and now I find myself the author of numberless crimes of a diabolical character and the cause of ruin and misery and disgrace to thousands—ay, to tens of thousands. Oh how I feel for those on whom all this ruin must fall! I could bear all punishment but I could never bear to witness the sufferings of those on whom I have brought such ruin. It must be better that I should not live. No one has been privy to my crimes—they sprung from my own cursed brain alone. I have swindled and deceived without the knowledge of any one. Stevens and Norris are both innocent and have no knowledge of the fabrication of deeds and forgeries by me and which I have sought to go on in the horrid hope of retrieving. It was a sad day for all when I came to London. I can give but little aid to unravel accounts and transactions. There are serious questions as to my interest in the Grand Junction and other undertakings. Much will be lost to the creditors if these cases are not fairly treated. The Grand Junction the East Kent and the Swiss Railways the Rome line the Coal Co are all liable to be entirely lost now—so far as my assets are concerned. I authorise you to take possession

of all my letters, papers, property, &c., &c., in this house and at Wilkinsons and 18 Cannon Street. Return my brother his letters to me and all other papers. The prayers of one so wicked could not avail or I would seek to pray for those I leave after me and who will have to suffer such agony and all owing to my criminal acts. Oh that I never quitted Ireland! Oh that I had resisted the first attempts to launch me into speculations. If I had had less talents of a worthless kind and more firmness I might have remained as I once was honest and truthful—and I would have lived to see my dear Father and Mother in their old age. I weep and weep now, but what can that avail!

J. SADLEIR.

Robert Keatinge, Esq., M.P.,
Shamroque Lodge, Clapham.

Banks, railways, assurance associations, land companies, every undertaking with which he had been connected, were flung into dismay, and for months fresh revelations of fraud, forgery, and robbery came daily and hourly to view. By the month of April the total of such discoveries had reached £1,250,000.

While the three kingdoms were ringing with this frightful story, and the career of the Sadleir party was being recalled and narrated like some tale of a band of mediæval banditti, a piece of news almost as astounding burst on us all. Mr. Keogh was elevated to the bench, clothed with the ermine, as puisne judge of the Common Pleas! In the

days that were now close at hand, the agents of revolutionary conspiracy found no more irresistible argument in pushing their terrible propaganda amongst the people than a reference to this transaction, and to the story of "Sadleir's Brigade."

CHAPTER XVI.

THE ARBUTHNOT ABDUCTION.

On Sunday, the 2nd of July 1854, I was standing with some friends outside the ivied gateway of Holy Cross Abbey, county Tipperary. We were examining a curiously sculptured stone of the sixteenth century, built into the wall close by the northern end of the bridge which here spans the Suir, when a cry or shout on the other side of the river, and the noise of a horse in rapid gallop, attracted our attention. Looking quickly around, we had barely time to get out of the way when there dashed by us at furious speed a police orderly, his horse all flecked with foam, and mud spattered to the top of his shako. What was it? Not another "rising," surely? "A landlord shot, as sure as we live," exclaimed one of our party; and standing where we did, on Tipperary soil, in the midst of a famous shooting district, no guess could have been more

natural under all the circumstances. After a while we turned into the abbey, and having spent an hour amidst the ruined aisles of King Donald's church, and the shattered tombs of prince and lord, we forgot for a moment the hurried horseman, and came away. It was only when we returned to Thurles, after a brisk walk of three miles, we had an explanation of the incident at the bridge. "Did you hear the news, sir—did you hear the news? Carden of Barnane; the country is up in pursuit of him; all the police are out, and the mounted men are giving the alarm, and ——"

"But what has he done?"

"Done, sir! Didn't you hear? Miss Arbuthnot—the young English lady, a sister of Mrs. Gough, that he was mad in love with, they say—sure he tried to carry her off; and there was a bloody battle between his men, all armed, and the people defending her, and he was beat, but an orderly has brought word to our sub-inspector that they say he was took an hour ago, on the road below at Farney."

Could we credit our ears? An abduction! Had the worst days of the last century come back on us once more? An abduction, and by Mr.

Carden of Barnane, one of the magnates of the county, a great landlord, grand juror, magistrate, deputy-lieutenant! Before nightfall the town was all excitement over the story, which was told in a hundred versions. True it was that an event destined to startle the kingdom from end to end had just befallen within a few miles of where we stood. "For years past," said the *Times* two days subsequently, "no event of any political cast has created greater excitement than the adventurous attempt of the lord of Barnane to possess himself, by means beyond the pale of the law, of a bride possessed of all the requisites, personal and pecuniary, which were but too frequently irresistible for the philosophy of the Celtic temperament."

About three miles from Clonmel, the beautifully environed capital of southern Tipperary, stands Rathronan House. The road to Cashel leads due north for two miles, when, at Rathronan Church, it turns sharply to the left and west. Here it skirts for a mile the southern boundary of Rathronan demesne, after which it turns again northwards. On this road is the avenue entrance to Rathronan House, the gate lodge being half a mile from the little church already referred to. In

1854 Rathronan was the residence of Captain the Honourable George Gough, eldest son of Field Marshal Lord Gough, the hero of Sobraon. Captain Gough had married an English lady, daughter of Mr. George Arbuthnot, of Elderslie, Surrey, and at this time two sisters of Mrs. Gough, Laura, the elder, and Eleanor, the younger, resided with her. The fame of these fair Saxons filled the county. They were young, handsome, and accomplished. When I add that they were heiresses to considerable fortunes, it will be at once admitted they were fascinating and irresistible. So at least thought all the young gallants of the "upper ten" in Tipperary. Eleanor fairly turned the heads of several of them; yet her heart was obdurate; she was impartially civil and cold to all. Amongst these suitors was "the lord of Barnane," Mr. John Carden.* He had met her at Marlfield, the charming residence of Mr. Bagwell, long time member for Clonmel, and soon the North Riding squire was the most desperately in love of all. He followed her every-

* He was cousin of Sir John Carden, of the Priory, Templemore, and was called "Woodcock Carden," so often had he been fired at when at one period of his life he was carrying out extensive evictions.

where. Wherever she appeared—at archery meet or at flower-show, at concert, evening party, or county ball—there was he, like one under a spell, having eyes for nothing and nobody but her. Between him and Captain Gough there existed the friendly and social relations of one county gentleman with another constantly met in the hunting-field and the grand jury room; but the families were not intimate in their intercourse. At length Mr. Carden formally proposed for the hand of the English maiden. He was refused—refused under circumstances that not alone wounded his feelings, but caused him to believe that he owed his repulse, not so much to any aversion on the part of the young lady, as to unfair opposition on the part of her family. Once this idea took possession of him, there was no displacing it. Trifles light as air were viewed as corroboration; a fancied glance as she passed him in the street, a flourish of her whip as she drove by in the pony-phaeton, were embraced as so many signals that she really loved him, but was under restraint. The plain truth was she cared not a jot for the lord of Barnane. Very likely she may have been for a while a little pleased with or vain of his attentions; but she did all

that a young girl could well do, without being painfully rude, to repress any closer advances once things became serious.

The ladies of Rathronan House were in the habit of attending divine service on Wednesdays at Fethard, a town distant northward six or seven miles. On Wednesday, the 28th of June 1854, from one reason or another Miss Eleanor and Mrs. Gough stayed at home, and the elder Miss Arbuthnot, Laura, and a young lady friend, Miss Linden, were driven to the church at Fethard, by a servant named Hoare. While he was engaged in stabling the horse during the time of service, Hoare was accosted by Mr. John Carden's confidential "man," Rainsberry, who was very inquisitive, and asked quite a number of pumping questions about the young ladies. He elicited from Hoare, at all events, the fact that Miss Eleanor was not of the party. Returning home the ladies encountered on the road, at a place called Market Hill, Mr. Carden, who was on horseback, and it was observed that drawn up close by was a carriage. Furthermore, Hoare noticed that soon after the Rathronan phaeton passed a car drove up, containing Rainsberry and four other men, who joined the attendants of the carriage in the by-way. These

circumstances, however, seem to have aroused no particular suspicions at the time.

Next day there was the Midsummer Flower Show at Clonmel, the favoured annual rendezvous of the county gentry, or rather of the county ladies. Mr. Carden was early on the ground. He sauntered through the marquees, and strolled along the stands; but the bloom of June roses had no charm for him. His eye sought only the flower of Rathronan. In the afternoon she appeared. He accosted her; asked how her sister was. She bowed, answered that her sister was very well, and passed on. All effort to engage her in conversation was baffled.

On the following Sunday, 2nd of July 1854, Mrs. Gough, Miss Arbuthnot, Miss Eleanor Arbuthnot, and Miss Linden attended divine worship at Rathronan; Captain Gough being all this time absent in Dublin. The party were driven to the church on an Irish "outside" car. As they entered the churchyard they saw standing behind a tombstone, as if idly waiting the commencement of the service, Mr. Carden of Barnane. Considering the incident of Wednesday, the meeting at the flower show, and, above all, the fact that Rathronan was not the church

which ordinarily he would attend, they must have felt his presence to be only a new demonstration of that "haunting" process of which they had by this time become painfully conscious. As a matter of fact, he attracted general notice, nearly every one understanding that he came to have a look at "Miss Eleanor." During devotions he exhibited not a trace of nervousness, excitement, or anxiety. He withdrew at the close of the regular service; but as this was Sacrament Sunday the Rathronan ladies waited to communicate, and consequently did not leave at the same time.

The morning had been so fine that the ladies left home, as I have mentioned, on an open vehicle; but scarcely had they entered the church when heavy showers came on. The coachman, James Dwyer, quick in thought, drove back to Rathronan (distant three-quarters of a mile), put up the outside jaunting-car, and returned with what is called a "covered car" in its stead. This is a description of vehicle which is entered at the back, the passengers sitting on each side *vis-à-vis* within. Dwyer little dreamt how much was soon to turn on this change of "traps."

There had meantime drawn up outside the Rathronan demesne gateway a carriage, to which

were harnessed a dashing pair of thoroughbreds. Six strange men were observed loitering about close by; and on the road outside the entrance to the churchyard a groom led two saddle-horses. When Mr. Carden quitted the church he mounted one of them, and rode up to where the carriage stood. He spoke a few hurried words, on which the coachman gripped his reins, and the six "guards," or attendants, at once closed in. Mr. Carden got off his horse, and earnestly examined the housings of the two magnificent animals yoked to the carriage. Every strap and buckle, band and trace, was minutely and carefully scrutinised and tested. The examination concluded, he again mounted and rode back towards the church. He met Captain Gough's covered car returning with the ladies. He at once wheeled round and closely followed it, his horse's head being barely a few feet from the end of the vehicle. Dwyer, the coachman, as he neared the gateway, saw the strange carriage and the attendants, and knew that behind was riding Mr. John Carden of Barnane, the importunate suitor of "the young mistress." Some thought that all was not right flashed like lightning through his mind. He had not time to work the problem out to any very clear conclusion; but

as he neared the gate, he, with a sort of instinctive alarm, shook the rein and cried to his horse. Before a touch of his whip could fall, the six men dashed forward, seized, and stopped the car. Then first he recognised in their leader Rainsberry, and divined what was up. He sprang from the driving seat, exclaiming, "Rainsberry, you villain, let go my horse; you'll pay dear for this!" A blow on the head from a skull-cracker tumbled Dwyer to the ground. Rainsberry shouted out: "Cut, cut! Knives, knives!" One of the band pulled from beneath his coat a large garden knife, freshly sharpened, and with one stroke severed the reins of the Rathronan horse; another and another, and the traces hung on the road. This was but the work of a few seconds—years of terror and agony they seemed to the screaming victims in the car. At the instant the vehicle was stopped Mr. Carden jumped from his horse, rushed over, and grasped at Eleanor Arbuthnot. But the whole chapter of accidents were in her favour that day. She happened to be farthest in; he could touch her only by reaching across Miss Linden, who, sitting on the same seat, was next the door. Had the ladies been on the outside car which bore them to church in the morning, one pull from their assailant would

have brought any of them to his feet. But, placed as they now were, they were considerably sheltered from attack; and before Eleanor could be reached the other three had to be pulled out and disposed of. All four showed fight in the most determined manner, fully realising what was on foot. Mr. Carden succeeded for a moment in gripping Eleanor. With desperate energy he pulled and strained to drag her out. Laura held her back, and Miss Linden, drawing her clenched fist with all the force she could command, struck the undefended face of the deputy-lieutenant a smashing blow. Blood spurted from his nose and streamed down his face, covering his shirt front and vest. He loosed his hold and turned sharply on his lady assailant. In vain she shrieked and struggled; he tore her furiously from her hold, and flung her on the side of the road. Mrs. Gough, whose condition of health at the time made a scene like this almost certain death for her, sprang as best she could out of the car, and rushed through the avenue towards the house, screaming for help. A young peasant, named McGrath, was the first to arrive on the scene. He saw Captain Gough's herd at some distance, and shouted to him to hurry—that there was murder going on. Then,

with genuine Tipperary vehemence, he dashed into the fray. Had it been a struggle altogether between men, McGrath would doubtless have been perplexed which side to espouse, lest he might by any mischance be striking in behalf of "law and order"—the police, the magistrates, the landlords, or that concatenation of them all, "the Government." But he saw women attacked, and he could make no mistake in hitting hard at their assailants.* Mr. Carden returned to the car after hurling Miss Linden aside, and renewed his endeavours to drag Eleanor Arbuthnot from her seat. "Eleanor! Eleanor!" he exclaimed, "it is you I want. I know I shall hang for this. My life will be the price!" Laura yet remained with her; and he found he must get rid of the elder sister as he had disposed of Miss Linden. After a long contest he succeeded, and there now remained in the vehicle but the one whose capture was the object of all his efforts. The hapless girl had seen her companions and protectors one by one torn from her side, and now her turn had come. Bravely,

* He is, I believe, still alive, and now in a very respectable position. Miss Arbuthnot presented him with a handsome gold watch, suitably inscribed; and Lord Gough obtained for him a situation in the Excise.

nobly, all undaunted, would she fight to the last! She put her arm through a leather hanging-strap that was fixed beside the window, and held on for dear life. She struggled frantically against the powerful savage, who wildly pulled and tore at her with all his force. Several times had he succeeded but for the interference, at the most critical moment, of some one of her few defenders outside; for all this time a deadly encounter was proceeding on the road. McGrath, his head literally gashed with wounds; Dwyer the coachman, and Smithwick the herd, also bleeding profusely, were, ever and anon, despite the greater numbers of their foes, able to make a dash at Mr. Carden, and drive him from his hold. But, by the testimony of all who saw that scene, not one of them fought so daringly as Miss Linden. Again and again she was flung to the ground by Mr. Carden; as often did she spring to her feet and clutch him by the throat, tear his hair by the handful, and pound his face till it bled anew!

Gasping, breathless, almost fainting—he had received a fearful blow of a stone on the temple from McGrath—Mr. Carden cried to his followers, "Cowards! cowards! come on. Why don't you fire? why don't you fire?" But happily they

would not fire, though in the carriage close by firearms had been provided. The only one of them who seemed ready to proceed to extremities was Rainsberry. The others, as they subsequently complained, had been told that Miss Eleanor Arbuthnot was to be a consenting party to the abduction. When they saw the turn the affair had taken, they wished to be well out of it. Every moment showed them more clearly that their necks were being run into halters; and every moment also lessened their chance of escape. Help was now approaching; shouts were heard in the distance. The maddening thought forced itself on Mr. Carden that he had failed, and must fly. Not readily, however, could he be got to realise the astounding fact. His attendants almost forced him into the carriage, and like arrow from the bended bow, off it flew, two of the finest blood horses in all Munster straining in the traces.

Clonmel was the first to receive the alarm, and quickly Mr. Goold, the resident magistrate, Mr. Fosberry, the sub-inspector of police, and a strong party of constabulary were in full chase. They rightly guessed that the fugitives would make for Templemore, and they dashed away northwards. Meanwhile the Rathronan farm steward had

taken horse and galloped to Cashel, where, on receipt of the astounding news which he brought, Mr. M'Cullagh, the sub-inspector, with all the mounted officers of his force, soon took saddle and gave pursuit. About three or four miles north of Holy Cross, and within four or five of Barnane gate, is Farney Bridge, close by Farney Castle, the picturesque residence of Mr. Armstrong. Here, after a ride of ten miles at full gallop, they sighted the carriage going at a desperate pace. But Mr. M'Cullagh's horses were fresh, and the run of twenty miles from Rathronan, over very heavy roads, had told severely on Mr. Carden's. The officers soon overhauled the vehicle and summoned the occupants to pull up and surrender. The answer was a shout of defiance. Instantly springing from the stirrup, Mr. M'Cullagh rushed at the horses, managed to seize them, and by turning them slightly ran the carriage into the ditch. Two attendants jumped from the "dickey" and showed fight, but they were at once overpowered. In fact, Farney police barrack was quite close at hand, and on the first noise of the affray the men turned out, arriving in time to assist in the capture and disarmament of the whole party. Mr. Carden was discovered to be severely

wounded about the head and neck. There were found upon him a loaded six-barrelled revolver, a loaded double-barrelled pistol, a belt containing £315 in gold and English notes, a memorandum book, and a lady's lace veil. With the prisoners were taken three "life-preservers," one stained with blood, a large knife, and a pouch of revolver ammunition. In the carriage were a coil of rope, coats, rugs, shawls, quite a variety of clothing, and a black leather bag. On opening the bag it was found to contain two bottles of chloroform, one bottle of mixture, a sponge, a bottle of smelling salts, a bottle of tincture of valerian, a small goblet, some ladies' gloves, a pair of ladies' slippers, a crochet vest, a wig, some bandages and lint, besides minor articles. One of the chloroform bottles was marked "a teaspoonful to a cup of water." From the following entry discovered in the memorandum book it would seem that Mr. Carden meant to drive through his own demesne without stopping, despatching this written message to some trusted agent there :—

"Lock the main gate; bully and baffle all pursuers; but don't endanger life. Lead pursuers to suspect that I'm shut up in the tower.

Rake the gravel at the house to remove tracks. Give a hint to Johnson to be a friend and mislead the pursuers. Do not forward my letters, but write yourself to St. James's, and protect the men who were with me."

All, however, was over now. His desperate game was played and lost. He was led a prisoner to Cashel jail.*

So incredible did it seem that such an outrage as this could happen in our country in the middle of the nineteenth century, that when the first reports appeared in the Dublin newspapers there were many readers who derided the story as a sensational fiction. It was only when every day and hour subsequently brought irresistible corroboration that men universally accepted as a fact the astounding narrative.† The particulars

* One of the carriage-horses, worth a hundred and fifty guineas, dropped dead on the road, ere they had proceeded more than a mile towards the town.

† The curious influence of example in crimes of a peculiar nature was soon exemplified in this case. Within a week or two abductions suddenly reappeared in several parts of the country. A few days after the Rathronan attempt a Tipperary policeman carried off a respectable young girl from her friends; and at Cork John Walsh, a printer, was committed for the abduction of Mary Spillane, a girl under eighteen years of age, who was entitled to a good fortune on attaining her majority.

that came later to hand intensified the general excitement. It became known that the measures Mr. Carden had concerted for the abduction of Miss Eleanor Arbuthnot had occupied his attention for a long period, and had involved a considerable expenditure. He had, it was stated, decided upon conveying her to the shore of Galway Bay (distant some fifty miles), where he had a steamer chartered for the purpose of taking her off to sea; relays of horses being placed along the entire route from Templemore to Galway. The vessel with steam up was lying off the shore, and it was stated to be his intention to sail direct for London. These preparations cost him a sum of about £7000.

On Thursday the 27th of July 1854 the Tipperary South Riding assizes were opened in Clonmel by the Right Honourable Judge Ball. Hardly within the memory of the oldest inhabitant was there such a throng of the county families as filled the town upon that day; for the sensational trial of Mr. John Carden was to be the great item of the calendar. The Honourable George O'Callaghan, high sheriff, was in a state bordering on frenzy for several days previously. Ladies, young, old, and neuter, hunted him remorselessly from post to pillar with unappeasable demands for admission-

tickets. He piteously explained that a considerable enlargement of the county court-house was impracticable at such short notice; and that he feared the judge would not listen to the idea of conducting the trial on the racecourse or in the fair green. All to no purpose. Every fair persecutor was very sure *she* would take up little room—"hardly any at all"—and could easily, "if he pleased," be provided with a nook whence she could see that poor mad creature Mr. Carden, dear soul, who had "loved not wisely but too well," and so forth; and it was nothing but downright ill-nature, to be resented to the day of his death, for him, the high sheriff, or Sam Going, his surly "sub," to say the places were already assigned. He fled the town—was "not at home" to inquirers; but they pushed their way into his study all the same. Then he took to his bed, and gave out that he was very ill—a combination of measles and whooping-cough, with a touch of scarlatina, the *Chronicle* newspaper said it was; but the delightful beings would penetrate to the side of his couch, and while he groaned out from under the counterpane that except the dock there was not an inch of space undisposed of, they gave him "bits of their

mind" in return, which they assured him he would never be allowed to forget!

It is not to be concluded that the sterner sex were at all less earnest in their persecutions. But it was not Mr. Carden *they* wanted to see. "One glimpse at that lovely, that heroic girl," was begged and scrambled for with wild enthusiasm. "Sure you can see her some other time," expostulated poor Mr. Going. The result of such observations on his part was his exclusion from "society" in the South Riding for several seasons afterwards.

Jamque dies infanda aderat. Old Judge Ball, grandly preceded by halberdiers and pikemen and trumpeters, and attended by the truly unhappy sheriff "in state," went down to the court-house. The Honourable Cornwallis Maude, foreman of the grand jury, having listened to his lordship's opening address, retired with his brethren for a while. Soon they returned into court with a "true bill" against their long-time friend and fellow-magistrate, Mr. John Carden, for the forcible abduction of Miss Eleanor Arbuthnot of Rathronan. It was known that great legal contention would arise as to whether Mr. Carden could be said in law to have effected the

"abduction," as he had not succeeded in removing the young lady from the car. To guard against mishap the Crown sent up minor indictments for attempted abduction and for aggravated assault. On these also true bills were returned. The jury acquitted the prisoner on the charge of abduction. Next day he was arranged for the *attempt* to abduct, and was found guilty. A third time, on the following Monday, he was put on trial for a felonious assult on Smithwick, the Rathronan herd. This was very generally felt to be an overdoing of the business by the prosecution, and sympathy with the prisoner was openly expressed on all sides. When the jury this time handed down a verdict of "not guilty," there was "loud cheering" in the court; "the ladies waving their handkerchiefs." More astonishing was the fact that the crowd assembled outside the building—belonging to a class with whom Mr. Carden, as a landlord, was no great favourite—gave vent to like demonstrations. Before sentence was passed he obtained permission from the judge to make some observations, and he addressed the court with great ability, exhibiting considerable tact, delicacy, and judgment in all he said. He disclaimed earnestly, and I

verily believe with perfect truth, the unworthy motives as to personal resentment, malice, or gain that had been imputed to him. He solemnly declared that he had not "the slightest idea or knowledge of the delicate state of Mrs. Gough's health." "If I had been aware of it," he added, "I certainly would have forbidden the making of any such criminal attempt." Lastly, he indignantly repelled the idea that the drugs found in the carriage were intended for the purpose of producing insensibility.

This address was listened to with breathless attention, and beyond all question elicited much feeling for the man against whom but a brief week before every voice was raised. The judge, however, took a justly stern view of the facts, and sentenced Mr. Carden to two years' imprisonment with hard labour in the county jail. On the following day the *Tipperary Free Press* announced that already the unfortunate "lord of Barnane," clothed in prison garb, had commenced the dreary expiation invoked upon him by a passion which even this ordeal was not to extinguish.

Three years rolled by. Every one seemed to have forgotten the Rathronan episode, when suddenly in the newspapers there appeared the

startling heading, "Mr. John Carden again! Further attempts on Miss Arbuthnot!"

In these sensational announcements he was somewhat wronged; yet the story was strange enough in its simple truth. Imprisonment, humiliation, mental and physical suffering, public scorn, the relentless hostility of her friends, had failed to shake Mr. Carden's infatuation for Miss Arbuthnot. He followed her unseen. He inquired about her movements, and seemed happy only when, at all events, near the spot of earth which she irradiated. The young lady, on the other hand, suffered the exquisite torture of ever-present apprehension. She knew her tormentor was around. He had managed to reach her presence and speak to her once at least subsequently to his release, having followed her to Elderslie in Surrey. On this occasion his excited manner quite affrighted her. In October 1858 she was staying with her sister, now Lady Gough, at St. Helen's, near Blackrock, co. Dublin, when the woman who kept the gate lodge one morning reported an alarming story. For two or three days consecutively a well-dressed female had been calling at the lodge, inquiring as to Miss Eleanor's movements—at what times she went out, and whether she ever walked by herself in the

demesne. At length—so the lodge-keeper averred—the mysterious stranger revealed that she came from Mr. Carden, and that a large sum of money would be given if he were assisted to an interview with the young lady in the house or grounds. This was not the only story which reached Miss Arbuthnot. She was told her demented persecutor had declared that when the Gough family went to live at Loughcooter Castle (recently purchased by them), "which was a lonely place, he could easily carry her off." Things seemed to be getting serious; so on the next visit of Mr. Carden's female ambassador to the gate lodge, she was seized and handed over to the police. Informations were sworn against Mr. Carden, who was forthwith arrested and called upon to give substantial securities that he would not molest or annoy Miss Eleanor Arbuthnot. Once more we were in the midst of the old excitement. The police court at Kingstown was this time the scene of a protracted trial. It became evident there had been a good deal of panic exaggeration on the part of the lodge-keeper. It was equally clear there had been much crafty duplicity practised by the female ambassador. She had been formerly a domestic in the employ of Miss Arbuthnot's family, and recently saw her

advantage in engaging as housekeeper to Mr. Carden. She knew his weakness, and flattered it. She pretended to have interviews with Miss Eleanor, and brought him cheering messages. In short, the magistrate saw that on this occasion Mr. Carden was very nearly "as much sinned against as sinning." Nevertheless he deemed it prudent to bind him in heavy penalties to be of the peace for the space of one year—a requirement which he resignedly fulfilled. That year flew by, and many more, and still he trod his solitary path through life unshaken in the conviction that Eleanor Arbuthnot loved the man she publicly spurned. The fact that she never married another perhaps strengthened his hallucination. It is said he more than once travelled secretly to Loughcooter to catch, unseen, one glimpse of her on the road, or in the grounds, and then returned as he went.

Tipperary, the North Riding especially, is full of the most astonishing stories of this remarkable character. At the time of the abduction he was about fifty-four years of age. He was a compactly built, muscular man; about five feet six inches in height; haughty, perhaps it might be said overbearing, with strangers, and not given to forming friendships. Yet he was warmly regarded by

his dependants; and, fiercely stern as was his dealing with some of his tenantry, many of them —those who experienced his better qualities—spoke and speak of him in the highest terms. He was educated in England; and on attaining his majority found his property had been "under the courts," as the people say—under a Chancery receiver—for several years, owing to litigation. The tenants, making some pretext out of this state of things, thought to escape paying him the rent. He came home to Barnane, summoned them all to meet him on a given day, and announced to them his ultimatum—rent or land, pay or quit. They had the repute of being a desperate lot, and they apparently relied on this to intimidate him. The rent they would not pay; the land they would keep; having reasons, they said, to justify the former resolve, and determination to maintain the latter. But they knew not their man. He said nothing more just then, but forthwith proceeded to put Barnane Castle into fortress condition. Blacksmiths and carpenters were set to work to make the doors and window-shutters bullet-proof; and when this was done a goodly stock of provisions was laid in. Local tradition asserts that he had the stairs cut away, and the interior of the castle so arranged

that if the first story was forced he could retreat to the next, and, by pulling up a ladder, cut off all communication. He now commenced operations in the law-courts. Ejectment decrees were taken out against the tenants, and the work of eviction began. It was open war between him and them. I am told that when any of "the enemy" surrendered, he not only restored them to their land, but treated them liberally as to terms. Those who refused to submit were remorselessly expelled. Of course he was shot at—again and again; but, with miraculous good fortune, always escaped. His pluck, his daring, extorted the admiration of friend and foe. One day, as he was riding along the road towards Nenagh, he was fired at by two men in an adjoining field. He faced his horse round, and although it was truly a stiff jump, cleared the fence at a bound, galloped after his would-be assassins, struck one of them senseless with a blow from his loaded riding-whip, then overtook the other, dismounted, and, after a desperate struggle, captured him. He deliberately took off the stirrup-leathers, and with them bound his prisoners, and marched them into Nenagh jail. They were tried for the crime, convicted on his evidence, and hanged. It was, I believe, during

this "war" that the insurgent country in a body marched on the castle, but found him so securely barricaded that he could not be got at. They, however, had prepared to take revenge on him in another way. They brought with them a number of horses and ploughs, and now commenced to plough up the beautiful and extensive lawn before the hall-door. Mr. Carden had a swivel-mounted cannon on the top of the castle; he loaded it with grape-shot in view of the ploughing party, and then sang out to them that they had ten minutes to depart. They unyoked in five, and galloped off.

In the last few years of his life his eccentricity took a curious turn. He converted the castle into a vast hotel, and erected very extensive and costly Turkish baths. I am not sure that he ever threw the establishment open to the public in the ordinary way, but visitors or tourists passing the way were, I am told, very hospitably received. Some six years ago he was attacked with apoplexy, and never rallied. His death once more recalled his name to public notice; and with all his failings, the general sentiment was one of compassion and regret for one so strangely compounded of merit and demerit. I know not who succeeded to his

estates, or whether the castle and its beautiful grounds are visited as of yore; but for many a generation yet to come the story of his life and adventures—most of all the Rathronan abduction—will thrill listening groups around the firesides of Tipperary.

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